

SILENT AMONG THE SILENT:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE SPIRITUALITY OF
ELDERLY JAPANESE AMERICAN CHRISTIAN WOMEN

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Doctor of Philosophy

by
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ABSTRACT

SILENT AMONG THE SILENT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE SPIRITUALITY OF ELDERLY JAPANESE AMERICAN CHRISTIAN WOMEN

by

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Phenomenological observations of elderly Japanese American Christian women's spirituality resulted in uncovering multiple oppressive influences during their life journeys, which silenced many of them. Those factors include: sexist tendencies of traditional Japanese religious cultures, racism of white America against Japanese Americans, negative sexual stereotypical images, and authoritarian teachings of certain Christian churches. Self-denial and blind-faith were some of most typical characteristics of those silenced women.

This study, however, also discovered several women who were not silenced in spite of those damaging, oppressive influences in their lives. They were emotionally available and full of self-expressions, and at the same time very polite and accommodating. Focusing on one such woman, the author theorized that it was her spirituality of openness which enabled her to become a woman who possesses a freedom of her will and a kindness

of her heart.

Although historical as well as social aspects of the internment camp experiences of the Japanese American community have been well documented by historians and anthropologists, the religious or more specifically the "spiritual" aspects of the Japanese American Christian experience have not been fully investigated, partly due to their silence. The voices of most participants in this study have never been heard by outside observers.

Based on a process-phenomenological model of theological reflection, the study employs a grounded theory method to observe people's experiences and build theories that are grounded in observed and analyzed data. Based on a process concern for the past, the history of Japanese American experiences was also detailed as an important part of this study. The process perspective, used as a corrective theological influence, also helps to explore some practical theological approaches to encourage those silenced elderly Japanese American Christian women to move toward a more spiritual openness. It is hoped that this study will become a catalyst for further studies on Japanese American Christians by those who want to learn from and help this

community.

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CHAPTER 1

Purpose of the Study

Japanese American people in the United States have encountered numerous challenges and difficulties during and after World War II including the wartime internment and other types of racial discrimination that are unique to their ethnic community. Historical as well as social aspects of the internment camp experiences of the Japanese American community have been well documented by historians and anthropologists. However, the religious, or more specifically the 'spiritual,' aspects of the Japanese American experience have not been fully investigated. This research is being conducted in an attempt to reveal how the struggles of the Japanese American community have been impacting the spirituality of the elderly Japanese American Christians in certain context, both individually and collectively.

This study also focuses on Japanese American elderly women's experiences. On top of receiving many unfair and unjust race-motivated treatments as Japanese, Japanese American elderly

women have experienced sexism in two fronts, one stemming from their old Japanese culture and the other stemming from their new American culture.

The term Japanese American points to a certain group of people in the United States. They are the daughters and the sons of Japanese immigrants who became citizens of the United States. All the participants of this study are called "Nisei" or the second generation Japanese.

The term "spirituality," on the other hand, is a difficult one to define. The White House Conference on Aging, held in 1971 in Washington D. C., wrestled with the term and announced that, "all persons are spiritual, even if they have no use for religious institutions and practice no personal pieties."¹ Several definitions were also presented to allow for a better grasp of the term. Many members of the conference used such words as: person's ultimate concern, person's basic value, central philosophy of life, and supernatural and nonmaterial dimensions of human nature.²

At this particular church, where most of the participants in this research attend, often uses the term 'spiritual' in a

way that one is more or less spiritual. Generally it describes one's quantitative involvements in private religious activities such as prayer and Bible reading or in public religious activities such as attending various activities at the church. Usually, one is considered more spiritual if her or his involvement is more frequent or lengthy. Still, the term "spirituality" or "spirit" means different things to different people. During the course of this research, the participants will define the term "spirituality" for themselves." And during the last phase of this research, the "spirituality" of the participants will be interpreted through using several theological and developmental theories.

This research on elderly Japanese American Christian women will employ a method of phenomenology, or more specifically, the grounded theory. Phenomenology, as a theory of qualitative inquiry, is fundamentally concerned with the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of a person or group of people. A phenomenological study, therefore, focuses on descriptions of what a person or a group of people experience, and how it is possible that they experience what they have experienced.³

Grounded theory takes this approach one step further and focuses on the emerging theories from systematic comparative analysis, which is grounded in fieldwork.⁴ Perhaps grounded theory is most accurately described as a research method in which the theory is developed from the data, rather than the other way around.⁵

Therefore, the first and foremost purpose of this research is to attempt to build a meaningful and reliable theory, based on the fieldwork among the elderly Japanese American Christian women focused on their spirituality, that may make a significant contribution to the Japanese American community as well as for the larger society.

This research is one of the first of its kind to be conducted among this community. Because the number of Japanese Americans who have experienced World War II is becoming smaller, this research may well be one of the last of its kind to be conducted. It naturally follows that this research may well be the last and the only opportunity for the outside religious communities to listen to the stories of those who experience trials and tribulations and persevered so much.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Starting Point

Since this study on elderly Japanese American Christian women deals with issues of religion and spirituality, it needs to employ a theological perspective. I have chosen process theology and it will serve as a theological reference point as well as a methodological tool in this research. I believe process theology, based on its affinity with phenomenology, supports the kind of qualitative research that I am conducting in this dissertation. I also believe that process theology and its certain theological emphasis can provide valuable inputs for the lives of the elderly Japanese American Christian women in this study. In this chapter on theology, I will look at several basic concepts of process theology as well as those of phenomenology. I will then examine how the approaches of process theology and phenomenology are harmonized as a tool of theological research. I will also, at the end of this chapter, introduce my own theological inclinations and present several key theological questions that

may be important for this research. In order to engage these issues of process theology and phenomenology, I will briefly examine some of the important ideas and theologians of process theology.

Whitehead and Process Theology

Process theology was established mainly upon the development of a philosophical system by Alfred North Whitehead. The term "process theology" was derived from his Gifford lectures entitled, "Process and Reality" in 1927-28 and was originally used by Bernard Loomer in his writings.⁶ Whitehead's philosophical system was launched by his conviction that the Newtonian theory of matter, space and time was in error; reality is not static but dynamic and fluid. He wrote, "... the flux of things is one ultimate generalization around which we must weave our philosophical system."⁷ He understood that humans live in a world of change, fluidity and development, and as human beings, experience those phenomena themselves. For Whitehead, "One all pervasive fact, inherent in the very character of what is real is the transition of things, the passage one to another."⁸

Whitehead also rejected a "monopolar" view of God, which was

accepted by orthodox Christianity in favor of a "dipolar" God. "A monopolar" God is an absolute and timeless eternal God. "A dipolar" God, on the other hand is a God who has an eternal (potential) pole and a temporal (actual) pole. Whitehead called this God's primordial nature. For Whitehead, God should be "viewed as primordial, he is the unlimited conceptual realization of the absolute wealth of potentiality. In this aspect, he is not before all creation, but with all creation."⁹ So God is also in process himself as the world that is an actual pole of God. For Whitehead, God "does not create eternal objects; for his nature requires them in the same degree that they require him."¹⁰

Hartshorne and Process Theology

Since Whitehead, process theology has taken two main directions. One emphasized the empirical aspects of Whitehead's process theology.¹¹ The other emphasis was placed on the rational aspects of process theology and was championed by Charles Hartshorne, who in many respects became the chief articulator of process theology.

Hartshorne, like Whitehead, embraced a bipolar view of God and rejected a monopolar view of God such as that of Anselm,

Augustine, and Aquinas. However, there are considerable differences between the two. First, Hartshorne differed from Whitehead in his view of the metaphysical concept of God. Whitehead considered God as a single actual entity, whereas Hartshorne saw God as a series or society of actual entities.¹² The two poles of God's character, which Hartshorne called God's "abstract essence" and "concrete states," then should be understood not as simply physical and mental poles, but as "analogous to the distinction between a man's enduring character, on the one hand, and the concrete states of his existence which instantiate this abstract character, on the other."¹³ Second, Hartshorne differed from Whitehead methodologically. Although some have characterized their differences as plainly empirical and rational, such a contrast would be an oversimplification. However, Hartshorne has thought out much more thoroughly issues of metaphysical truth and ways of distinguishing two sets of metaphysical categories in knowledge, one analytic and the other synthetic or *a priori*.¹⁴

Cobb and Process Theology

John Cobb, who follows the tradition of Hartshorne, also

differs in his understanding of God compared to Whitehead. First, unlike Whitehead and similar to Hartshorne, he saw God not as an actual entity but as a living person. He also viewed God as the continuously self-surpassing reality, ever succeeding himself.¹⁵ Cobb also wished to avoid some of the problems buried in Whitehead's views, especially the problem of determinism. In doing so, Cobb denied Whitehead's notion of initial aim of subjective aim derived exclusively from God. Cobb stated, "The subjective aim of the new occasion must be formed by some synthesis or adaptation of these aims for which it is itself finally responsible."¹⁶

Some Basic Doctrines of Process Theology

Although some of the key concepts of process theology have been revealed in the prior sections, I will now examine some of the basic assumptions that are important in this research.

God: God of classical theism like that of Anselm, Augustine, and Aquinas, is a God who is immutable and impassive. Process theology confronts this view and introduces an idea that the world, and God himself, should be understood not as static but as dynamic. Schubert Ogden writes, "God, too, must be conceived as a genuinely

temporal and social reality, and therefore as radically different from the wholly timeless and unrelated Absolute of traditional theism."¹⁷ Ogden, however, does not mean that God is one more creature among many others who are also "becoming." In fact, Ogden sees God as the perfect example of becoming who knows and loves us. He wrote, "Because his love or power of participation in the being of others is literally boundless, there are no gradations in intimacy of the creatures to him, and so there can be nothing in him corresponding to our nervous system or sense organs. The whole world is, as it were, his sense organ, and his interaction with every creature is unimaginably immediate and direct."¹⁸ Therefore, God is God because God relates to everything that happens. In a stark contrast with the God of classical theism, process theologians "view God in terms of their newer metaphysical categories: temporality, development, change, relatedness, and interdependence."¹⁹

Incarnation and Christ: Whitehead explains God as present in everything and participating in every becoming occasion. Hartshorne defined God's greatness in relation to the universe and stressed God's essence as love and giving. W. Norman Pittenger, who himself admitted that he was greatly influenced by Hartshorne,

formulated the first genuinely Whiteheadian Christology.²⁰ So Pittenger defines the deity of Christ not in terms of divine essence but in terms of divine activity in Christ. Christ's deity denotes "that which is act of God in him, that which is act of God through him; or. Better expressed, it is God acting in and through him."²¹ Pittenger understood that since classical theism viewed God as immutable and impassible, such a God could not enter into the suffering of the world. In stressing the humanity of Jesus saying that Jesus was a "genuine man, ... sharing fully and completely in the human experience,"²² he highlighted that the God of process, who is related in and through all things "contains suffering, in accordance with the suffering of the world."²³ For Pittenger, the Christian idea of a suffering deity – symbolized by the cross, only made sense in the vision of process theology.²⁴

Novelty: One of the key concepts in process theology is the notion of novelty or creativity, which is, according to Whitehead, "that ultimate principle by which the many, which are the universe disjunctivity, becomes one actual occasion, which is the universe conjunctivity."²⁵ In the process view the universe moves from separatedness toward unity, "the many become one, and are increased by many."²⁶ And this creates a novel entity that is

more than its parts. Whitehead wrote, "The novel entity is at once the togetherness of the 'many' which finds, and also it is one among the disjunctive 'many' which it leaves."²⁷ Cobb sees the God of process thought as God of changing and developing order. God is "the ground for order," but it is a "changing and developing order, an order that must continually incorporate novelty if it is not to become repressive of enjoyment."²⁸ "Actualization of novel possibility generally increases the enjoyment of experience," according to Cobb and Griffin, for "the variety of possibilities that are actualized in an experience adds richness to the experience, and the element of novelty lends zest and intensity of enjoyment."²⁹ This notion of novelty also enables a person to grow as an individual as well as within community. Randolph Miller wrote, "It establishes the rhythm between solitude and fellowship. It leaves room for men's freedom and responsibility, and provides an interpretation of evil in a pluralistic process without blaming God for either sin or evil."³⁰

Phenomenological Method

The perspective of phenomenology will also be used in this

research in conjunction with process theology. Phenomenology, as a philosophical tradition, was first developed by a German psychologist and philosopher Edmund Husserl. By phenomenology, he meant the study of how humans describe things and experience them through their senses.³¹ His most fundamental philosophical postulation was that we could only know what we experience by attending to perceptions and meanings that awaken our conscious awareness.³² He, as a psychologist and unlike Freud, focused on human consciousness rather than unconsciousness. Husserl also saw the physical world and an individual's consciousness as interconnected parts of an inseparable relationship. He denounced the human tendency to see those two as separate things and asserted that this tendency leads people to lose sight of people's own experience of reality.³³ For example, a surfer may encounter a 10-foot wave as an exciting physical challenge, a potential threat to her or his life, and an amazing and powerful expression of nature that nurtures life. To eliminate all of these experiences and speak of a wave only as a creation of a human consciousness or a body of water moving at a certain rate is very limiting.³⁴ Since phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of human beings' everyday

experiences, "anything that presents itself to consciousness is potentially of interest to phenomenology, whether the object is real or imagined, empirically measurable or subjectively felt."³⁵

The phenomenological method can also be described as bracketing process in which individuals defer their own judgments as much as possible to see past all the layers of meaning that have built up.³⁶ And in doing so, according to Husserl, humans are able to recover meanings that are specially "present" to their consciousness.³⁷ So bracketing is a part of a reduction process, in an attempt to the things themselves.³⁸ This is why Merleau-Ponty depicted phenomenology as "a philosophy for which the world is always 'already there' before reflection begins."³⁹ Thus, phenomenologists focus on how human beings can put together the phenomena they experience in such away as to make sense of the world and, in so doing, develop a worldview.⁴⁰ Phenomenologists must also be "rigorous in their analysis of the experience, so that basic elements of the experience that are common to members of a specific society, or all human beings, can be identified."⁴¹

Bridging the Gap Between Process Theology and Phenomenology

According to Mary Elizabeth Moore, the perspective of process theology affirms the phenomenological method in several different ways, although the relationship between the two may not be apparent at first glance. First, both phenomenology and process theology view living human experience as an important source of knowledge. Whitehead emphasizes the importance of inquiry, grounded in human experience.⁴² It is human consciousness that gives access to reality and the interpretation of it that gives access to knowledge.⁴³ Second, both phenomenology and process theology recognize that every experience is unique and will not necessarily follow known laws.⁴⁴ Third, both phenomenology and process theology acknowledge that the observers are also included in the vast subjective web of relationships that make up the reality in this world.⁴⁵

There are, however, very significant differences between process thought and phenomenology. Process theology is grounded in a historical biblical tradition and a metaphysical system, and it emphasizes the internal relations between God and the world. Phenomenology, on the other hand, focuses on present, subjective

relationships based in the consciousness of self-conscious subjects.⁴⁶ And to make the differences between the two more prevalent, many philosophers associated with the field of phenomenology, such as Merleau-Ponty and Sartre, are atheists.⁴⁷ So how can these two schools of thought be combined together? Moore, in her brilliant move as a practical theologian, builds a 'bridge' between the two perspectives by comparing and drawing from each other's strengths as well as each one's weaknesses. She also re-forms each perspective based on the challenges, which became apparent during the bridging process. As a result, Moore states, "we can see that the phenomenological assumptions about reality do not necessarily have to exclude God or the world from human existence."⁴⁸ She also goes further and says, "We can emerge from the bridge, then, with a phenomenological method much more open to the experience of God and the natural world, and we can emerge with a process philosophy much more concerned with perceiving the facility of experience and exploring the subjectivity of human existence."⁴⁹

Process-Phenomenology Method of Moore

The end results of this bridging done between process

theology and phenomenology that Moore discusses provide fruitful paths for a joint research venture. Out of about a dozen unique features of this process-phenomenology method, which Moore lists in her book, I chose and combined points that are especially relevant for this study on the particular group of people namely that of elderly Japanese American Christian women.

One, the process-phenomenology method, needs to listen to the poor and the powerless. If God is incarnate in all actuality, special attention needs to be given to the experiences of those who have been ignored in human society.⁵⁰ Two, this method needs to consider carefully the web of relationships where the experience is grounded. If God is incarnate in everything, then attention should not simply be given only to the immediate person of in the immediate situation, but to the richness of full human communities.⁵¹ Three, a person using this method should cautiously consider her or his prejudgments, with healthy skepticism, since she or he is also interconnected in the web of human relationships.⁵² Careful bracketing of one's relationship with a person or with the community is crucial. Four, the importance of including prayer and meditation in allowing mysteries incarnate in the world to touch human beings should

also be listed as an important part in using this methodology.⁵³

Five, the researcher who is using the process-phenomenology model needs to give prudent attention on methodology as well as theoretical reflection on human experiences. Process theologians such as Marjorie Suchocki, asserts that while feminist theology draws actively from people's experience, process theologians tend to only give accounts.⁵⁴ Other process theologians such as John Cobb and Thomas Au, pointing to the needs of elderly people, have encouraged researchers to conduct phenomenological studies to learn and draw more from the spirituality of elderly people. They wrote, "the investigation of the spiritual need and opportunity of the aged is not a simple empirical question. It can be approached through interviews and questionnaires or through quite subtle observation of behavior."⁵⁵

Six, a process-phenomenology method needs to seek the past dwelling in the present. According to the process notion of concrescence, all of the elements of past experience are brought into a unity in the becoming occasion.⁵⁶ Since the past cannot and should not be removed from the present, historical reflections on a society should be taken seriously and should be an important part of this investigation. Seven, using this method will require people to

take human subjectivity more seriously, giving more attention to the inner experience of the subject. The phenomenological emphasis on subjectivity asks questions: "How do people's life goals and fears and hurts affect their view of the world and their decisions for action?"⁵⁷ Such questions, according to Moore, can easily be overlooked in process theology.

The Researcher's Own Theological Views

Although I, as a researcher, have chosen process theology as a tool of research in this study, I personally hesitate to affirm some of its theological perspectives that have been introduced in this chapter. In fact, I come from a very conservative or classical theological background, which is often criticized by many of the process theologians. I tend to lean toward a more orthodox view of God and of the scripture. Some may wonder, at this point, why I chose process theology to guide this study.

A process theologian, David Griffin, offers a helpful analysis of classical theism, or more specifically of the Thomistic concepts of God, in his book titled *God, Power and Evil: A Process Theodicy*.⁵⁸ He identified eight attributes that shape

the core of Thomistic theism as following: pure activity, immutability, impassibility, timelessness, simplicity, necessity, omniscience and omnipotence. Although I personally affirm some of these classical concepts of God such as timelessness and omnipotence, and have no intention of abandoning the classical theism altogether, I do agree with Griffin's evaluation of classical theism as inadequate in addressing some of life's important issues. Having been a minister in a conservative church for some years now, I have witnessed firsthand many wonderful ways in which people's lives have been transformed for the better in the church where I serve. I have also witnessed and have been a part of inadequate ways in which the church and its theological focuses deal with some of the aspects of people's lives, especially in the area of self-image and experience of pain and suffering. Church members are provided with many opportunities to listen to different images of God, with the emphasis usually on God's greatness and holiness, however I feel very little time is being spent on how each individual sees him or herself in light of his or her view of God. In dealing with the issues of pain and suffering in individual lives as well as that of a group, the aspect of

endurance and also of the heavenly hope are strongly emphasized in the church, often neglecting to talk about how one can deal and overcome life's difficulties. I believe process theology addresses some of these concerns in people's lives that classical Christian theology does not. I also believe the perspectives of process theology can serve as a corrective influence in the spiritual life of many elderly, Japanese American women I encountered.

Using the process-phenomenology method as well as the process perspective, I am attempting to undertake three different theological exercises in this study. First, I wish to do theology, using the process-phenomenology method, starting from people's experiences, and not solely from the Bible. Second, I wish to use the process perspectives to illuminate some of the important issues that have risen out of this research on the lives of elderly Japanese American women, especially in the area of self-image and the experience of pain and suffering. Third, I would also like to attempt to do what Moore has done in her book Teaching from the Heart, that is to have brief interchanges between the process perspective and my own theological perspectives, specifically in the area of concerns among the elderly Japanese

American women and their spirituality.

Key Theological Questions Raised by Researcher

In this beginning section of this paper, before describing the actual studies among a group of elderly Japanese American Christian women, I wish to impart several theological questions that I feel are very important for in this research, based on what I have observed from the research participants.

First, how does one's view of God's transcendence affect her spirituality? By the term transcendence, I am referring to a common theological notion that God is different from human beings and not exactly the same. Most Christian churches teach the transcendence of God, however, the degree of differences varies a great deal. For example, Anselm's classical view of God is very different from that of Whitehead's panentheism. I am specifically interested in how the elderly Japanese American Christian woman's views of God are impacting their spirituality, and how can I take the best of both worlds, classical and process theism, in dealing with this issue.

Second, how does Christian determinism affect one's spirituality? By the term determinism, I do not mean the

philosophical determinism such as that of Hobbes or Spinoza. I am talking about a common Christian notion that says, since God is an omnipotent and all knowing being, all the past, present, and future events were already determined by God. During many months of observing the elderly Japanese American Christian women, I have heard many comments, which seem to indicate that many of them view their past, present, and the future has already been determined and cannot be changed. I am interested in how this view affects the lives of many elderly Japanese American Christian women especially in their dealing with pain and suffering. I would like to address, more specifically, the issue of compatibility between determinism and the meaningfulness of human actions.

Third, how does a traditional cultural notion of virtue interact with a similar Christian notion of virtue? Inheriting a large part of their sense of virtue from their Japanese parents who grew up receiving strong Japanese cultural influences, many elderly Japanese American women used certain Japanese words representing several very common notions of virtues, such as endurance and patience. Many of those notions actually overlap with Christian notions of virtue that are commonly taught in

Christian churches. I am interested in how those overlapping notions of virtues affect elderly Japanese American Christian women, and how should a Church deal with them theologically.

These three theological questions will be revisited at the end of this study. I will now move to the actual steps in which this research on the spirituality of the elderly Japanese American Christian women will be conducted.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This qualitative research on the elderly Japanese American Christian women will employ the grounded theory. I have also chosen Michel Quinn Patton's book, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* to direct and control the study methodologically.⁵⁹

Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

Thinking about research alternatives and method choices in studying a group of people, there are two ways in which a researcher can approach the subject. One is a quantitative approach and the other qualitative. A quantitative approach requires the use of "standardized measure so that the varying perspectives and experiences of people can be fit into a limited number of predetermined response categories to which numbers are assigned."⁶⁰ One of the advantages of this approach is that it is possible to evaluate the feedback of a large number of people,

using a limited set of very specific questions. A quantitative approach, in general, gives a broader and more general picture of reality. A qualitative approach, on the other hand, produces results not arrived at by statistical procedures or other ways of quantification. This method can approach the field of research "without being constrained by predetermined categories of analysis," thus contributing "to the depth, openness, and detail of qualitative inquiry."⁶¹ This approach produces rich and detailed information about a much smaller number of people and cases, however dependent on the ability and the skill of individual researchers.

A specific issue here is which approach, quantitative or qualitative, can bring about the results that are more accurately reflecting of elderly Japanese American Christian women's lived experiences, behaviors, emotions, and feelings that. Since, "qualitative methods are descriptive, discovery-oriented, language based, and address the meaning of human experiences," and therefore are most sensitive and appropriate to the investigation of "various types of meaning in life (personal, experiential, social, cultural) and existential topics that center on spirituality and religiosity." I, as a researcher,

strongly believe that a qualitative approach is the most appropriate method for studying this group of people and for this topic.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is one of many approaches in qualitative inquiries, and it focuses more on the process of generating theory rather than focusing on particular aspects of human experience.^{6 2} It is an inductive approach, which moves from the specific to the more general. The chief objective of grounded theory, then, is to expand upon an explanation of a phenomenon by identifying the key elements of that phenomenon, and then categorizing the relationships of those elements to the context and process of the experiment.^{6 3} Strauss and Corbin, the authors of *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* stated that grounded theory "denotes a set of well-developed categories (e.g., themes, concepts) that are systematically interrelated through statements of relationship to from a theoretical framework that explains some relevant social, psychological, educational, nursing, or other phenomenon."^{6 4}

Actual procedural steps of grounded theory include data collection, analysis, interpretation, and theory building. And since this research employs the perspective of phenomenology, which focuses on lived experience of people, each step of this research will mainly be focused on elderly, Japanese American women's experiences. I will now examine the actual methodological steps of this study.

Data Collection

This research will be constructed upon phenomenological concerns, which focuses on the lived experience of people, specifically that of the elderly Japanese American Christian women. This research will be conducted by using a technique called grounded theory, which focuses on the process of generating theory through the systematic comparative analysis of data that is grounded in fieldwork.^{6 5}

A variety of qualitative data will be gathered with the use of triangulation, which includes, standardized open-ended interviews, observation and comparison of people's behavior both in public and in private, as well as observation of naturally occurring social interactions in their own religious community.

Standardized Open-ended Interview

One of many types of grounded data in this research comes through the avenue of standardized open-ended interviews, since the purpose of this study is to describe a particular subgroup in depth.^{6 6} Standardized open-ended interviews make qualitative inquiry highly focused and make efficient use of the time possible for both the participants and me, the researcher. Standardized, open-ended interviews also make analysis and evaluation of the data often more uncomplicated.

There are 16 open-ended interview questions that were used in this research. They are the following:

- 1) Please describe some of your difficult and/or challenging experiences in the past.
- 2) What helped you to overcome or deal with those difficulties and/or challenges?
- 3) How did those difficulties and/or challenges impact you spiritually?
- 4) Please describe other experiences (including such experiences as fun and joy) in your past that significantly impacted you spiritually.
- 5) Please describe some of your current or recent difficult and/or challenging experiences.
- 6) What is helping you to overcome or deal with those difficulties and/or challenges?

- 7) How are those current or recent difficulties and/or challenges impacting you spiritually?
- 8) Please describe other current or recent experiences (including such experiences as fun and joy) that are significantly impacting you spiritually.
- 9) What changes do you see in your spirituality over the years?
- 10) What caused, triggered, or brought about those changes?
- 11) How would you describe yourself spiritually at present time?
- 12) Please describe your outlook for your spiritual future?
- 13) Please tell anything else that you may wish to tell.

Several aspects of these interview questions may need to be explained. One, the terms "World War II" and "internment camp" were intentionally omitted from the questions, for the purpose of letting the participants communicate what they consider to be difficult and/or challenging. Some participants may not consider their experiences in the internment camps difficult or challenging, and if so, this is important data. Two, the term "spirituality," which is a highly subjective religious term that can mean different things to different people, was intentionally left un-defined in the open-ended questions so that the participants could define the term for themselves. Three, since the title of this research includes the word "journey,"

open-ended questions were designed to cover the participants past, present and future.

Homogeneous Sampling

Different researches require different sampling procedures depending on the focus of the research. For example, 'maximum variation sampling' captures the central themes that cut across a great deal of variation, whereas, 'extreme case sampling' seeks to encapsulate characteristics of special instances and circumstances.⁶⁷ This research on Japanese American women will employ, in its standardized open-ended interviews, homogeneous sampling for the purpose of describing this particular subgroup in depth.⁶⁸ The proposed title of this research, "Elderly Japanese American Christian Women and their Spiritual Journeys," which limits the participation to a very specific group of people, essentially requires that this study employ homogeneous sampling.

Therefore, in order to limit the participation according to the proposed title of this research, six conditions will be applied to potential participants: 1) each participant must be a female; 2) she must have been born in the United States; 3)

she must have been born to Japanese parents; 4) she must have lived in the United States for most of her life; 5) she is over 65 years old; and 6) she acknowledges herself being a Christian for most of her life.

By limiting the perimeter of participation to these specifications, one is reasonably assured that the participants are: 1) elderly Japanese American Christian women who have experienced the war-related difficulties (not all Japanese Americans were interned, but all were discriminated against during and after the war in one way or another), 2) elderly Japanese American Christian women who are able to make comments on their spirituality from a viewpoint of Christianity, and 3) elderly Japanese American Christian women who are facing (and perhaps currently experiencing) age-related limitations and difficulties.

Participants are also required to sit through approximately two hours of an in-depth interview and to have reasonable cognitive ability to recall their past, talk about their present life, as well as discuss their future.

All the elderly Japanese American Christian women who participated in this study are from one Japanese American

Christian church in Southern California. A pilot survey was conducted on all people who were attending a regularly scheduled meeting for the seniors at the church and were asked if they fit the above description. Out of about 60 Japanese American Christians over the age of 65, there were 22 people who fit the participation requirement of this research. Out of those 22 people, 10 were willing and available to participate in this study.

Other Observations During the Interview Process

Video and/or voice recordings are planned to be used to document, not only the words but also the facial expressions, voice intonations, as well as observation of any personal (or collective) expressions (such as artworks, symbols, pictures, and music) that the participants may desire to share with me. These things can be a very important source of data along with the content of the interviews. Comments made off-camera will also be observed.

Triangulation of Sources

Using the "methods triangulation" means that this research

will have more than one data source.⁶⁹ Other sources, sources other than the results of the standardized open-ended interviews, include observation on participant's natural social interactions, review of related literature including historical sources.

Observation of the participants' natural social interactions for this study focuses on the Wednesday senior fellowship group and its activities. Once a week, on Wednesdays, about 60 elderly persons gather at the church and have fellowship. I have observed this gathering for three years, which will be detailed in a later chapter. I will attempt to observe all that is possible, including nonverbal communications, and things that are conspicuously absent from the environment from my point of view. Numerous informal conversational interviews have also been conducted and are recorded by myself on different occasions at different locations. The results will also be shared as a data source.⁷⁰

Although it is not considered as data from my observations of participants' experience, historical information will be a very important part of this research. It will shed light on the experiences of the Japanese American Christian women and will provide important information for the context of their

experience.^{7 1}

Analysis of Data

Since each qualitative study is unique, the analytical approach used for this research will also be unique. Qualitative analysis, according to Patton, depends on the researcher's analytical ability and style.^{7 2} The creativity of the researcher also is an important factor in the examination of data, making it an analytical art according to Strauss and Corbin.^{7 3} However, the analyst does have a responsibility to monitor and report her or his analytical procedures and processes as fully and truthfully as possible.^{7 4}

The answers of standardized open-ended questions will be recorded verbatim and will be presented in a way which will help enable a case analysis, which means writing a case study for each person interviewed.^{7 5}

Content analysis will then be performed to observe and locate patterns and themes in the data, including the data from standardized open-ended questions as well as from other observations. The term 'pattern' usually refers to descriptive findings, whereas the term 'theme' usually refers to

categories.⁷⁶

Perhaps an example that Patton uses may be helpful. When a group of visitors were asked questions by a researcher doing a study on wilderness education, most of them expressed they were afraid of falling off the cliff. That is a pattern that the researcher found. The theme, which categorizes the finding, may be a fear.⁷⁷

An inductive analysis, such as this, usually begins by finding key phrases, terms, and practices that are unique to those who participated in the study. Unique attributes and characteristics to identify one thing from another will be pointed out, using indigenous and analyst-constructed typologies.⁷⁸

I will always attempt to be mindful of what things fit together, in order to analyze the data for convergence. The analyst needs also to analyze the data for divergence, or "flesh out" the patterns and categories, by the process of extension, bridging and surfacing.⁷⁹

Qualitative findings are then judged by their substantive significance. Some of the questions that I will ask, using the guideline provided by Patton, are the following: 1) How

consistent and coherent is the evidence to support the findings?

2) To what extent and in what ways do the findings increase the understanding of elderly Japanese American Christian women's spirituality? 3) To what extent are the findings consistent with other knowledge about elderly Japanese American Christian women's spirituality?

On top of having the responsibility to monitor and report the analytical procedures and processes as fully and truthfully as possible, I will also need to anticipate the responses of those who participated in the study and those who read and review the results.⁸⁰

Interpretation and Theory Building

Interpretation entails, according to Patton, "attaching significance to what was found, making sense of findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, and considering meanings."⁸¹ And since this research uses grounded theory, a theory or theories must be built from the grounded fieldwork.

In order to accomplish this immense task, this research will employ theory triangulation, which uses multiple perspectives

or theories, namely, several different theological perspectives as well as theories in moral and spiritual development, to interpret the data. Those theories and perspectives will be presented in the last chapter of this research.

After the presentation of how data will be interpreted, the researcher may now, through the process of induction, set forth more generalized statements, which describe and/or explain certain phenomena in which the researcher was engaged.

Limitations and Perimeter of Research

Leading grounded theory scholars have called the analysis portion of the research "the interplay between researchers and data."⁸² It has also been described as "both science and art."⁸³ This is research in which the researcher's ability to observe, analyze and theorize plays a very important role. The researcher's experiences, personal beliefs, as well as presuppositions will also influence the outcome of the research. The researcher herself or himself may become the most limiting factor of this research, or, on the other hand, may become the most helpful feature of the study.

External Limiting Factors

There are external factors that may also limit the research. One possible limiting factor is the age of the participants. Although the requirement for participation in this study is to have a reasonable ability to recollect and express one's experiences and memories, the cognitive abilities of some participants (some participants may be in her late eighties) may hinder the data collection portion of the research.

One of the other possible external factors that may limit this study is the lack of emotional openness, which has been pointed out by many researchers in many Japanese American research participants.⁸⁴ Researchers name many possible factors including the cultural and historical background of the Japanese American community. Since personal feelings and attitudes are extremely critical parts of this research, it is very important that I gain the trust of the participants and be able to provide a safe environment, which would result in dispensing many important data.

The sensitivity of the researcher will also become an important element in this research. Going into this research, I will be basing my sensitivity mostly upon how seniors are

treated in Japanese culture, with great respect in language and in demeanor. I will be speaking with them, not so much as a friend, but more as a student who wishes to learn from an elder member of Japanese society. However, it is going to be a learning experience for me, as a researcher, to see which areas I need to become more sensitive in, as I continue to interact with the elderly, Japanese American women. And finding out an area of sensitivity may also become an important aspect of this research.

Finally, the way the research participants were gathered might trigger some to be concerned about the validity of this research. Participants for this research were selected from one particular Japanese American church in Southern California. The issue here is the fair representation or diversity of the research sample. It may be pointed out that having participants from only one church may limit the geographical, socio-economical as well as theological diversity of the sampled group.

Although all these three factors are very real, they do not pose a critical threat to the integrity of this study for two reasons. First, many members of this church have relocated themselves to Southern California from various other parts of the United States. Many other members also have moved to this

church from other churches in this area. Therefore, the projected make-up of the potential participants actually represents a reasonable diversity in its geographical, socio-economical, as well as theological backgrounds. Second, the grounded theory does not demand rigorous sampling diversities that the quantitative researches usually require for scientific validity. Grounded theory focuses on qualitative observations and not on quantitative inquiries.

Internal Factors: Placing the Researcher Himself

As was mentioned before, for any type of qualitative inquiry, and especially for a research utilizing the grounded theory, I play an important role in observing, analyzing, and theorizing people's experiences. Placing oneself in the context of the research, therefore, becomes very important.

Besides the theological framework, namely the process theology, which I have employed for this study, there are several other details about myself, which have some relevance for this study. One, I am a male Japanese citizen who has lived in the United States for over 10 years and who is a bilingual speaker. Two, I have worked at the church, where I gathered the study

participants, for three years as a minister for the Japanese-speaking congregation. Three, I have participated in a senior program at the church for the last three years as a volunteer.

I actually occupy a unique position in relation to my research participants who are elderly, Japanese American Christians. First, being Japanese, I possess a reasonable understanding of the Japanese culture and the history of Japan as well as of Japanese Americans. However, I am not an American, therefore I do not share the common history with the participants. That makes me neither an insider nor a complete outsider for this religious community. Second, seniors who are participating in this research are all English speakers, and therefore are not part of the Japanese-speaking congregation of the church where I preside as a minister. Although I attend the activities of the senior group, I am a volunteer and am not accountable for their spiritual well-being as a minister. Again, that makes me neither an insider nor a complete outsider for this group of people. It is my hope that this unique position will provide this study a critical edge needed to conduct successful in-depth interviews and observations as well as analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 4

Issues in Aging and Religion

Aging and Elderly Americans

Before a qualitative investigation of elderly Japanese Christians is to take place, it is important for those who study them to be acquainted with at least some of the important issues that are related to aging, religion, and the Asian American population in the United States.

I feel a bit awkward labeling all those who are over the age of 65 "elderly," because many of them, especially those who are in their 60s and in their early 70s, are very healthy and active. Aging actually begins at different points of one's life span and there are many different indicators of aging, such as biological, psychological, or social age. Chronological years are relatively poor markers of normal aging, since some people are "old" at 55, whereas others are "young" at 75.⁸⁵ However, it is also true that the commonly accepted age at which the term "aged" or "elderly" begins to apply has been at the age of 65 in the United States,

and is usually connected with the common retirement age. The term "elderly" used in this research, therefore, only refers to the person's chronological age and nothing else.

Age Related Concerns in the United States

Aging is a fact of life. Unless one dies well before the age of average life expectancy in the United States, she or he will experience issues that are related to aging. Although the effect of aging is different in every individual, there are, however, certain concerns that are common to many aging persons, which may greatly impact their aging process.

One of the most common concerns for the elderly that may seriously alter their life in their later years is the health status of an individual. Of course, different physical conditions yield different effects on individuals. Because of some physical conditions, one may need to alter her or his lifestyle, such as diet and physical activities. One may lose mobility and others may need to live with substantial pain. Interestingly, however, some data suggest that self and subjective evaluation of one's own health status was more important than a doctor's objective evaluation in one's experience.^{8 6}

Socioeconomic status of an individual also often seriously impacts her or his experience in later life. What makes the issue of money all the more important is that many elderly in the United States live on a fixed income and the lack of funds often impacts one's standard of living as well as treatment of her or his medical conditions.⁸⁷

Age also is an important concern for many people's experience in growing old. Generally, younger elderly have more mobility and better health than older elderly, however, according to those who survey the subjective well-being of the elderly population, one's mobility and health do not necessarily determine one's happiness or psychological well-being.⁸⁸

Another important issue that is often mentioned is ethnicity. In many studies on aging, the African American population has been regularly identified with having less satisfaction and happiness in life compared to the Caucasian population.⁸⁹ However, the United States is a multi ethnic country and one ethnic minority's experience may differ greatly from the other, one needs to be very careful, when attempting to generalize how ethnicity may influence certain minority populations of the United States.

Other common concerns that may alter one's experience in growing old include: retirement, widowhood and social interactions.⁹⁰

Asian American and Age Related Issues

Immigration and cultural differences are important issues, which in most instances greatly influence aging Asian Americans. Although very little theoretical progress has been made in the area of immigration, culture, and aging, especially with the Asian population, the most popular theory among American social scientists is currently called the "double or multiple jeopardy hypotheses."⁹¹ According to this theory, belonging to an ethnic minority group in the United States creates an additional source of stress for many, on top of age-related stressors that are commonly affecting the majority Caucasian population. For example, Fujii, in his article *Older Asian Americans: Victims of Multiple Jeopardy*, published in the *Civil Rights Digest*, contends that, many Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino elderly Americans are reluctant and sometimes even fearful of public social and health services because of language barriers, a lack of information, and the memories of past discrimination.⁹² Other

and more common forms of possible stressors originate from an Asian, elderly individual's inner conflicts, rather than stemming from person-environment interactions.⁹³ For example, unsolved conflicts between traditional beliefs of their mother country and the values of contemporary society, crises arising from one's identity and expected social role, and difficulty relating to mainstream society because of cultural barriers, are some of the internal factors that may negatively influence the Asian American elderly.⁹⁴

Although difficulties related to immigration and cultural conflicts do exist and have real potential for negatively affecting many elderly Asian Americans, ethnicity can also be a source of support and caring in some communities. For example, ethnically concentrated areas, such as Little Tokyo or Korea Town, also have unique services that are especially catered toward an ethnic population, where people can operate and negotiate their ways with relative ease without cultural or language difficulties. Certain ethnic communities also possess, within their cultural tradition, their own system and support and caring. The Confucian teaching of filial piety and respect for the elderly, which still has some bearing on Chinese and Japanese communities, are good

examples.

Religion and Elderly

Religion also plays an important part in the lives of many elderly Americans. Psychologists as well as other social scientists have conducted significant research on religion and elderly, and most results seem to point to the positive rather than the negative end. However, difficulties arise when the comparison of study findings is attempted in order to reach some coherent results. These difficulties can be seen in some of the following examples.

First, many studies have utilized vague wordings and concepts, which makes things difficult for finding commonalities between different results. This perhaps is very understandable, since religion and those who are involved often employ such highly subjective terms as: growing in faith, walk with God, and spiritual fulfillment, to name a few. It is a challenge for the researchers to maneuver among these many subjective languages to arrive at some scientific conclusions.

Second, difficulty arises when one attempts to define what religious activities are. Religion, at least among the Caucasian

population in the United States, tends to be considered something that is highly personal. If that is the case, religious activities such as praying, meditating and reading religious literature are emphasized and greatly regarded. Others, however, stress communal religious. For them, physically attending church services and having personal relationships with others are an enormously important aspect of religious activities.

Third, distinguishing the perimeters of religion or one's religiosity creates additional research problems. Many researchers will simply compare the frequency of church attendance or the number of hours one spends in reading religious documents in researching religion and its effect on the elderly. But, participants in religious activities will themselves impart that religion is much more than these activities. Religious attitudes, religious experiences and beliefs are very important for them. If one does not set a rational perimeter in researching religion, it only creates chaos. However, setting a perimeter of religion or one's religiosity may even be a more complicated issue to work out.

Aging and the Negative Effect of Religion

Some social scientists have found through their studies that there are ways in which religion or a person's religious involvement can bring injury to the elderly. The following are some examples.

First, religion can be harmful when religious goals are forced upon an elderly individual. In French-Canadian's research, low levels of life-satisfaction and self-esteem as well as higher levels of depression were recorded in participants whose religious motivation was imposed extrinsically by a religious system.^{9 5} This study also reported that those elderly, who possessed low levels of life-satisfaction and self-esteem, were not able to describe why they were involved in religious life. Many social scientists agree that in order for the elderly to have psychologically balanced religious involvement, religion must be personally defined.^{9 6}

Second, religious involvement may be harmful if a religious system lacks intrinsic flexibility to adapt to the ever-changing environment of the elderly. In some cases, because of the lack of flexibility in religion, a person may be left with no understanding of the situation what-so-ever or a person may seek

totally dysfunctional solutions to a problem.⁹⁷

Thirdly, religious involvements can be harmful to the elderly if a singular aspect of the religion was over-emphasized and paid no heed to other social and personal values that are perhaps more common in society.⁹⁸ In such instances, again, the elderly may be led to pursue psychologically dysfunctional actions and solutions.

Issues related to aging, religion, and Japanese Americans will be dealt with further in later sections of this research.

Elderly Japanese Americans at the Church

Most elderly members of this church appear financially stable. Some are actually very wealthy. In last three years of my involvement at this church, I have not heard of an instance in which financial help from the church was sought for some elderly members. I may, however, in the course of the interviews, which will be conducted in many of the senior members' homes, find financial issues that are causing difficulties in their lives. It is also very unlikely that language differences cause difficulties for the elderly members. Unlike other Asian Americans, such as Korean and Vietnamese, most of the seniors

are American-born citizens whose first language is English. Health issues, on the hand, seem to have very significant effects on many of the seniors. Many of them, especially those who are in their late 70sand80s, suffer from various types of illnesses as well as have spouses or friends who are suffering from age-related physical difficulties.

Organized religious activities of the Japanese American seniors appear to vary a great deal. Some are heavily involved in various church activities, such as regularly attending worship services and other smaller group functions. Others are very limited in their involvement, attending only the weekday senior fellowship. Personal religious activities also seem to vary a lot. Some have expressed that they have regular prayer and bible reading time on their own. Others say that the extent of their religious activity is limited to the church. In fact, the extent of their religious activities as well as how these activities influence their lives are one of most important topics of this research.

CHAPTER 5

Reflection on the Past: Race and Racism

According to the process notion of concrescence, all of the elements of past experience are brought into a unity in the becoming occasion.⁹⁹ Since the past cannot and should not be removed from the present, historical reflections on a society should be taken seriously and should be an important part of any research using a process-phenomenological model of investigation. As has been mentioned before, I feel very strongly that in order to understand and appreciate the present state of the elderly Japanese American Christian women participants in this study, I must first dive deep into their past. The reflection of their past, in this study, will occur in two viewpoints: one from race and racism, and the other from religion and religiosity.

Opening of Japanese Government

The relationship between the United States and the Tokugawa Shogunate government of Japan was normalized in March of 1854,

after the second visit of Commodore Perry with a demonstration of overwhelming show of force by U. S. Naval ships under his command. For over 200 years, with Tokugawa government's closed-door policy, Japan sealed its borders from foreign influences. Only a trickle of information came through Dutch merchants who were allowed to sell their goods in Japan with severe restrictions.

After their shocking encounter with the American ships and their advanced weaponry and navigational ability, Japanese leaders realized that they would have to catch up very quickly. They also feared, seeing the colonization of many Asian countries by western powers, that they may become a western colony unless Japan could build up its military ability to fend off any serious foreign attacks. The Tokugawa government sent students to western countries to learn, purchased large ships, and invited many military advisors to come to Japan.

The new foreign policy of open government escalated after the resignation of Yoshinobu from the Shogunate, which effectively ended the grip of power of the Tokugawa government. In 1868, the Tokugawa government fell and the new Meiji government was established. The new imperial government, with the Emperor

Mutsuhito as the figurehead in Tokyo, actively pursued importing western military technologies, governmental systems, as well as cultures. The Meiji government even forbade its officials from wearing traditional Samurai haircuts and dresses, in order to simulate the standards of the West.

The rate of rapid westernization in military buildup however, did take its toll financially. Japan, as a newcomer in the world economy, was taken advantage of because of its vulnerable financial structure and much of its gold reserves went overseas to western nations. Inflation and recession soon followed. Rural Japan's farming population as well as city merchants and craftsman suffered economic hardships. The immigration of Japanese workers to Hawaii and to the mainland U. S. had begun.

Early Immigrants to Hawaii

The Hawaiian Islands were unified by the King Kamehameha I for the first time in 1810. The Kingdom of Hawaii was recognized as an independent country in 1842, by the U. S. President John Tyler. After Kamehameha III permitted land purchases by westerners, foreign ownership grew very rapidly. A contract labor system was also established to bring foreign labor, mostly Asian,

to the sugar and pineapple fields that were owned by Americans and other westerners.

The emigration of Japanese nationals to Hawaii began with 148 contract laborers in 1868. The first big wave of emigration, however, took place in 1885, after Robert Walker Irwin, an American businessman and a special agent of Hawaii's board of immigration, encouraged Japan to send workers to Hawaii. Between 1886 and 1894, 28,691 Japanese came to Hawaii.¹⁰⁰

Sugar was the main agricultural resource, which brought much economic prosperity to mostly western landowners. In order to fill the demand of sugar field workforce, workers from other Pacific islands, China, Japan, the West Indies, many European countries as well as from the mainland U.S. were recruited.

Most Japanese immigrants to Hawaii came from an agricultural background and became sugar plantation workers. They endured harsh working conditions for many years, earning meager wages and living in impoverished housing.

In 1898, Hawaii was annexed by the United States and became a U.S. Territory, thus making Japanese immigrants in Hawaii under the care of the U. S. government.

Immigration to U.S. Mainland

The first group of Asians to immigrate to the mainland U. S. were the Chinese. Their movement began in large numbers in the 1860's. Most of them were used as manual laborers in the Western United States as railroad workers. They supported the building of an important piece of infrastructure in the American economy's western expansion. However, they were treated not only with low pay and poor working conditions, but also with extreme prejudice as their numbers grew from about 3,000 in the 1850s to over 100,000 in just 30 years.¹⁰¹

In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act barring further Chinese immigration for ten years, persuaded by prejudicial attitudes of the American public. This Act was extended another ten years in 1892, and in 1902 it was extended again indefinitely.

Japanese immigration to the mainland U.S. sharply expanded in the 1890's to fill labor needs of railroad building and farming as Chinese immigration ceased. By the year 1910, there were over 70,000 Japanese who immigrated to the mainland United States.¹⁰²

Contrary to common belief, the Japanese government did not encourage its citizens to immigrate to the United States. It was

extremely difficult to attain passports from the government. W. M. Rice, U.S. Commissioner of Immigration, reported to Congress after his fact-finding mission to Japan in 1899 that the Japanese government was taking extraordinary steps to insure the quality of immigrants to meet their standards for excellence. He stated, "... the government has acted upon the theory that the character of the Japanese abroad will be taken as an index of the character of the nation at home."¹⁰³ One of many restrictions was that the emigrant must show that he is capable of paying his way back to Japan before his passport was to be granted. The amount of cash that each Japanese immigrant declared on his arrival averaged 11 dollars in 1896 to a high of 26 dollars in 1904. This amount was considerably higher than that of other immigrants to the United States including those from Asia and Southern and Eastern Europe.¹⁰⁴

It has been pointed out by many historians that the makeup of the social backgrounds of those who immigrated to the mainland U. S. from Japan were different from those who immigrated to Hawaii. "From various types of data, it seems that Japanese who went to mainland United States came from less impoverished districts and higher social classes than migrants to Hawaii."¹⁰⁵

Japanese Government and Japanese Immigrants

Although in the eyes of white America, both Chinese and Japanese were seen as the same oriental immigrants displaying fairly similar work habits, there were considerable differences that existed. First and foremost, while the Chinese government was on the verge of collapse both economically and militarily because of the Western aggressions at the end and the 19th century, Japan, by the turn of the century, was fast becoming a world power with its rapid militarization. The Japanese government was concerned with its citizens and how they were treated in the United States, and in many instances complained to the U.S. government about mistreatment of their citizens. It has been reported that President Theodore Roosevelt was quite concerned about the treatment of the Japanese immigrants. He described anti-Japanese mobs of San Francisco as "idiots" with "foolish offensiveness" who may "at any time perform acts of lawless violence which would plunge us into war."¹⁰⁶ Some historians note that if the Japanese government did not possess international influence, Japanese immigrants may have encountered the Japanese equivalent of the Chinese Exclusion Act. With the government of Japan behind them, they were somewhat more inclined to resist

exploitation and unfair labor agreements.

Although President Roosevelt successfully fended off anti-Japanese legislation in Congress for the fear of having a negative diplomatic relationship with Japan, in order to resolve mounting fear of Asian immigration among U.S. citizens, he negotiated the so-called Gentleman's Agreement of 1907-8 to end effectively the immigration of Japanese laborers.¹⁰⁷ Immigration of Japanese women, however, continued after this agreement. From the beginning, the Japanese government took an active role in the immigration of women to the United States, in order to avoid typical problems associated with bachelors, such as prostitution and gambling. Between 1908 and 1924, over 65,000 adult, Japanese women immigrated to the United States, making women close to 40% of all Japanese population.¹⁰⁸ Among those women, some were wives of Japanese immigrants who were left in Japan when their husbands immigrated to the United States. Most, however, were newly married women who came as "picture-brides." Since many Japanese immigrants in the United States were not able to go back to Japan to find their wives, many marriages were arranged by the third parties, such as parents, relatives and family friends. This was already an established form of marriage called "omiai"

in Japanese society, and many committed to marry a person just by looking at a picture and some biographical information of that person.¹⁰⁹

Those women who immigrated were, in many cases, wage-earning industrial workers who lived away from home and who enjoyed relative independence. By the year 1900, 60% of the industrial workers in Japan were women.¹¹⁰ They were also well educated, compared to the western standards of the early 1900's, due to Japan's system of compulsory education.

Early Immigrant Labor

A report by the United States Immigration Commission of 1909 shows that about 75% of the Japanese who immigrated to the mainland United States settled in California. Others were scattered to Washington, Colorado, Utah, Oregon and other western states.¹¹¹ This report also shows that about 50% of Japanese were working in the farming industry, where as others worked in small business establishments and railroads.

The Japanese begun their farming work by becoming crop pickers and processors, however, many of them desired to work for themselves and begun to lease or share barren and inferior

land that was undesired by the Caucasian farmers. With their persistence as well as enduring heartbreaking losses and disappointments, the production of Japanese farmers grew from 6 million dollars in 1909 to 67 million dollars in 1919, which accounted for 10% of California's total agricultural output.¹¹²

Other Japanese immigrants made their way into the urban areas and worked in service, retail, and other small business operations. The Immigration Commission of 1909 estimated that there were over 3000 Japanese-owned business establishments, which employed close to 10,000 workers.¹¹³ Which meant that one in 10 Japanese who did not work in farming or railroads owned a business.

Unfortunately, this rapid increase of the Japanese immigrant population as well as the increase in their economic productivity added fuel to anti-Asian sentiments, which already existed in western states. Their success amplified discrimination and prejudice and made the lives of Japanese immigrants increasingly more difficult.

Racial Prejudice Against Japanese Immigrants

Racial prejudice against Asian people already existed in the

United States long before the arrival of Japanese immigrants. The first Asian people to immigrate to the United States were from China. Their immigration started in 1848, a year before the California gold rush, and continued until Congress passed the infamous Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. There were over 100,000 Chinese living in the United States, mostly in the Western states in the 1880's.¹¹⁴ Once in the United States, they were obligated to assume hard physical labor, which many in the Caucasian population shunned. Many worked in railroad construction and mining and were paid meager wages. They were also forced to live in slave-like conditions. This group of immigrants was treated vastly different from their European counterparts, while making very significant contributions to the western expansion of the United States. In spite of their patience and hard work, their lives became the target of racist remarks, mob violence, and vandalism by many American citizens.

As Japanese started to immigrate to the United States in the 1880's, they too became the target of racism. Racist remarks such as "Jap Go Home," "Yellow Jap," and "Dirty Jap," became some of the common utterances heard by Japanese. Cruel behaviors such as being spit upon and blatant mob violence often plagued Japanese

people. Job discrimination was also very common.

Racism not only came from individuals but also from the government, which actually even damaged the Japanese community more than any single individual or group. A series of racist accords as well as laws really harmed the Japanese immigrants. In 1907 the so-called Gentleman's Agreement with the Japanese government effectively ended the immigration of Japanese laborers. In 1913, an overwhelming majority of California legislators passed a bill denying landownership of Japanese immigrants. This law also made a provision stating that the land lease should be limited to a maximum of three years. Some Japanese circumvented this law by leasing their farmlands under the name of their American-born children. In 1920, California passed a tighter law, preventing minors from leasing farm lands. The U.S. Congress in 1924 passed a law setting a racial quota for immigration; this law was the most damaging one to Japanese immigrants prior to the internment. According to this law, only 100 Japanese immigrants were allowed to enter the United States, successfully ending the new immigration from Japan.¹¹⁵

Racism and the Second Generation

Nisei, or the American born second generation Japanese grew rapidly. In 1920, 27% of all Japanese were Nisei. In 1930, the percentage of American born surpassed the 50% mark.¹¹⁶ Nisei, mostly educated in the public school system, spoke fluent English as well as Japanese. Most of them graduated from high schools with good grades and many completed college. In fact, the average educational level of the second generation Japanese was two years of college, exceeding the national average. But racism did not pay any attention to their citizenship or to their education.¹¹⁷

Many Nisei experienced job discrimination. Even though the majority of them possessed a high level of education, very few were willing to give job opportunities to much hated Japanese. This was true in both the private and public sectors. Many Nisei awarded with college degrees disappointedly became fruit stand attendants and small-time family business helpers.

The Fateful Day

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and the war in the Pacific theater started. This event sealed the fate of over 110,000 Japanese immigrants living within the

borders of so-called the "military areas" of the United States.¹¹⁸

Soon after the attack, many newspapers, especially on the West Coast, ran countless articles attacking the Japanese immigrants. Headlines such as "Japan Pictured as Nation of Spies," "Evacuation of Jap Aliens Sought," and "Lincoln Would Intern Japs" appeared just in the Los Angeles Times alone, adding fire to anti-Japan hysteria.¹¹⁹ But the damage was done. Many white Americans viewed the Japanese as spies and their removal from the Pacific Coast as a necessary action to be taken by the military.

Many political historians, however, see a more sinister side of this white American sentiment toward the Japanese immigrants. Japanese, by the beginning of WWII, farmed many farmlands that were among the most productive on the Pacific Coast. Anti-Japanese land laws that were created in California were good examples of how the public feared the Japanese immigrant's economic competition and advancement, even before the attack on Pearl Harbor.¹²⁰

Even though any evidence of sabotage by Japanese living alongside the Pacific Coast was never produced, on top of the

fact that many Japanese were U. S. citizens, the tide of Japanese incarceration moved forward. The first official military proposal of mass incarceration was made on December 19, 1941, by Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, head of the Western Defense Command. On February 19, 1942, 74 days after the Pearl Harbor attack, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, authorizing the Secretary of War and his military commanders to designate "military areas" and to exclude "any or all" persons from them.^{1 2 1}

Outside of Japanese immigrants, only very few groups such as the Quakers and the American Civil Liberties Union, opposed this order. The sole objection in the Congress come from Robert Taft, a Republican Senator from Ohio, stating that this was one of the "sloppiest criminal" law bills that was ever drafted.^{1 2 2}

The Mass Exodus

The incarceration of over 110,000 Japanese was an enormous logistical undertaking. Among those who were being moved, about 70,000 were American born citizens who were under 35 years of age. People who were over 35 were mostly Japanese-born legal aliens.

From the beginning, many problems such as, treatment of the Caucasian spouses of Japanese and their mixed-blood children and Japanese orphans adopted by Caucasian parents, became difficult issues. Many racist and sexist policies were established by the military in many of these difficult cases. Families consisting of a Japanese wife and a Caucasian husband were exempted; whereas families consisting of a Japanese husband and a Caucasian wife were incarcerated.^{1 2 3}

Japanese were only allowed to take what they were able to carry when they were forced to relocate. Many tried to sell what they could before moving, such as store merchandise and farm equipment. Some Caucasians took advantage of the situation and paid very little for what they received. Most Japanese lost all that they had worked very hard for. Others lost significant articles such as Japanese Kimono (traditional dress), dolls and family treasures that were their only link to their cultural past. Children were forced to depart from their childhood friends and their playgrounds. Humans were not the only creatures affected by incarceration orders. Many signs such as "Kittens for nice home, to be given away" were displayed in the homes of Japanese children.^{1 2 4}

Life in the Camps

By August 1942, the U.S. Army completed relocating the Japanese into temporary "assembly centers."¹²⁵ Soon, they were sent to one of ten permanent relocation camps located in Manzanar, California; Tule Lake, California; Poston, Arizona; Gila River, Arizona; Heart Mountain, Wyoming; Granada, Colorado; Topaz, Utah; Minidoka, Idaho; Rohwer, Arkansas; and Jerome, Arkansas.¹²⁶

Camps were often located in desolate desert or swamp land of the forgotten corners of Middle America, that were either too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry. The Army's tarpapered barracks were so hastily built that in many cases they could not keep the weather out. With the average camp size of about 10,000 people usually in an area smaller than a square mile of space, some of the camps in the smaller states became one of the largest population centers overnight.¹²⁷ Barrack rooms ranged from 20 by 8 feet for smaller families to 20 by 24 feet for larger families. Spaces were usually divided by thin curtains, making privacy a foreign concept. A single center for bathroom, toilet and shower, was also shared by 50 or more families.¹²⁸ Meals were provided by the War Relocation Authority that were drastically different

from what most Japanese, especially the first generation, were used to eating. Out of convenience, meals were offered in the mess hall, effectively eliminating a meaningful family life.¹²⁹

Many Japanese, especially those with farming backgrounds, tried to cultivate the empty land within the camp's grounds to grow vegetables. Others with different talents, such as carpentry and dress making, worked hard to make the living conditions in the camp as tolerable as possible. Japanese schoolteachers, under the watchful eyes of the WRA authority, were able to teach the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic to the children.

Drastic Changes in Social Structure and Life Styles

Issei, or the first generation Japanese immigrants, were exposed to the societal values and lifestyles of the Meiji-era Japan before their emigration. Although the Meiji-era Japanese were experiencing the wave of rapid social westernization in their society, traditional ideals such as a hierarchical or a male-dominant family structure as well as loyalty toward the family unit existed as an important foundation of their family unity.¹³⁰ A Japanese word "ie" (often translated as house, household or family) describes the primary unit of the Japanese

social organization. This Japanese concept of family came from the Confucian tradition, which emphasized the stable family units ensuring the social stability.¹³¹ "Ie" was more important than individuals and each male "ie" members were obligated to carry the long-kept family tradition to the next generation. The structure of "ie" was strictly enforced by the paternal line in which the oldest male member had the most power in "ie" and the youngest female member the least.

During the internment of Japanese families, this tradition of "ie" was drastically altered. First, because the internment did not provide any jobs for men to earn their living, thus males no longer existed as the breadwinner of the family. Some work was available inside the camp such as, teaching in schools, doing carpentry work, or working as a seamstress, but men and women, young and old, were paid similar low wages. It has been pointed out by some historians that many married women, in pre-war Japanese immigrant communities, took to the fields, worked in the small business operations and toiled as many hours as men did earning a substantial part of the family income. Although this may have been true, most Japanese women still worked under their husbands' direction, which was very different from the

arrangements of the internment camps.

Second, the dinner table, family gathering was perhaps the single most important place for family communication in which transition values and teachings occurred, was lost because of the camp's eating arrangement of mess-hall dining. Third, due to WRA policy, the position of responsibility inside the campgrounds was only allowed to be held by those of U.S. citizenship. This usually meant that the younger "Nisei" or the second generation Japanese occupied the place of importance, whereas the older males were left out.¹³² These drastic changes effectively destroyed the established family patterns of behavior or "ie" for many Japanese families. This social alteration also resulted in a general loss of self-esteem in many Japanese men, who were already psychologically injured by the internment experience, along with the women and youth of the Japanese community.

The End of Relocation

After close to three years in incarceration, when the Supreme Court of the United States determined that the confinement was in violation of their constitutional rights, Japanese were

finally allowed to go home on January 2, 1945.¹³³ By the time this race-based exclusion was lifted, only about half of the original 110,000 Japanese were still remaining in the camps. Thousands of young Japanese men joined the military, fought alongside of the Caucasian soldiers, mostly in the European theater, and many including Dan Inoue, who later became the U.S. Senator from Hawaii, became celebrated war heroes.¹³⁴ Others left the camp, settled outside of so called "military areas" such as Illinois, Michigan, New York, and New Jersey, in an attempt to re-establish themselves among the Caucasian population.

However, the end of incarceration and the end of the war did not automatically spell the end of racial bigotry and discrimination. Returning Japanese faced more hardships including housing and job discrimination. Public school books also omitted discussions of the wartime internment.¹³⁵

In the late 1960s, a movement within Japanese Americans began to seek formal apology from the government for the injustices of the wartime internment as well as monetary redress for the survivors. In 1980, the Commission on wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians was established. In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which

provided a national apology and \$20,000 reparation to each surviving individual of the internment. The dollar amount was nothing more than symbolic. Some economists estimated that the total loss of the Japanese might be as high as 200 million in 1945 dollars, which is around 2 billion in 1983 dollars.¹³⁶ Nevertheless, many Japanese Americans felt that at least some closure and sense of justice was achieved by this act.

Japanese Americans Today

Almost 60 years after the internment and over 120 years after the first immigrants arrived on the shores of the United States, the Japanese American community in general enjoys relative economical prosperity. According to U.S. Census figures in 2000, the Japanese per capita income of \$32,745 in California is the highest of all ethnic groups, even surpassing the non-Hispanic white population whose per capita income was at \$27,998.¹³⁷

They also have gained many voices in national politics, Senator Inoue, Senator Hayakawa, and Congressman Matsui to name a few. In the current George W. Bush administration, former congressman Norman Mineta was appointed to be the Secretary of Transportation, becoming the highest-ranking Japanese American

in the executive branch of the U.S. government. Countless other Japanese Americans became lawmakers and local government officials. In spite of all these accomplishments, many Japanese Americans feel that they still encounter race-related issues such as fighting against a glass ceiling in the workplace and encountering insensitive racial remarks.

CHAPTER 6

Reflection on the Past: Religion and Religiosity

Coming from a different shore, Japanese immigrants originated from a unique religious and spiritual setting that was very different from the dominant European immigrants who inhabit the United States. Japanese immigrants' experience of religion in the United States was, therefore also very unique. Knowing the religious background of Japanese immigrants as well as their involvement in organized religion in the United States can shed light on understanding their spirituality.

Religions of Japan

Shintoism: One must gaze back to the prehistoric time of Japan in order to unearth the origin of Shintoism. It arose out of religious practices and ancient customs on the Japanese islands and was preserved and modified in many different forms. For many centuries, the religious customs and traditions were loosely gathered by different religious communities, with no central

organization and with no common name. It was not until the mid-6th century A.D. when Buddhism and advanced Chinese culture entered Japan that indigenous religious traditions were organized. In order to differentiate itself from the new religion, various myths and traditional customs were gathered and named Shinto, meaning "the way of gods".

Shintoism, however, became a tool for the nationalism of the Meiji Restoration. The Meiji government revised Shinto as one of the true faiths in Japan, establishing Shinto as a national religion.

Buddhism: It appears that the Mahayana branch of Buddhism was first formally introduced to Japan in A.D. 539, when the ruler of Kudara, a small kingdom in the Korean peninsula, sent a statue of the Buddha, along with some Buddhism writings. Whereas the Hinayana branch of Buddhism taught a sharper distinction between monks and lay people as well as stricter observance of Buddhist rites, the Mahayana branch, was more consciously universal in its appeal and taught that Hinayana ways are too narrow. The name Hinayana, meaning the smaller or narrower vehicle, was given to them by the Mahayana branch in criticism of their ways. Mahayana,

a name they gave to themselves, means a greater or broader vehicle.

When Mahayana Buddhism came to Japan by the way of China and Korea, it had already accommodated itself with Confucianist and Taoist thought-forms, such as strong filial piety and ancestor worship, to name just a few. Buddhism was embraced by the Japanese and, along with Shinto traditions, became a backbone of Japanese spirituality as well as culture and politics.

During the Edo era, the Tokugawa government created the "danka" system of civilian control, which required most Japanese to register their names to their local Buddhist temples. Because of this system, virtually all the Issei Japanese immigrants possessed ties to Buddhism with an obligation of ancestor worship.

Christianity: Christianity, on the other hand, was a latecomer to Japan's religious scene. In 1549, the first missionaries arrived in Japan and for many years, they were welcomed into Japanese society, creating many Japanese converts. However, at the beginning of the Tokugawa era, the first part of the 17th century, many Catholic missionaries and their

followers were seen as enemies of the government and were persecuted. The Tokugawa government saw Catholic missionaries as tools of the expansionism of western governments and were banned from Japan. During the Meiji era, Christianity was welcomed once again as Japan's new government attempted economic as well as military development to catch up with the western powers. However, both the population and religious influence of Christianity were very small.

Oppression of Women in Japan's History

The religions of Japan also played a part in influencing women's lives in Japan. In ancient history, Japanese women and women figures had always occupied very high places in society. Amaterasu-Omikami, the mythological creator of the Japanese islands, was a female goddess. The Empress Jingo-Kogo was the head of a Japanese army who was said to have succeeded in the invasion of Korea. An ancient Chinese document, 'Gishi Wajinndenn,' documents that the oldest known ruler of Japan around A.D. 200 was a Queen named Himiko who governed Japan with great authority. Japan's ancient religion or Shintoism seemed to regard women highly.¹³⁸

The decline of women's position in society, according to Baron Kikuchi, a Japanese educational historian, started when Buddhism along with the 'Confucian' system of moral philosophy was imported from China in the 7th century.¹³⁹

The ancient form of Buddhism taught that human beings are trapped in this world because it was their destiny of reincarnation. The ultimate object for human beings is to get out of this reincarnation called 'Karma' and go to the realm of nirvana. In order for a man to get out of Karma, he must perform many good deeds and obey the writings of Buddhism. But for a woman, unless she dies and then is born again as a man, Karma cannot be achieved. Ancient forms of Buddhism, unlike Shintoism taught that women are lower beings than men.

The *Rongo*, which was written by a Chinese philosopher named Confucius, became the main moral text for Samurai in the feudalism era. It also taught a doctrine about women similar to Buddhism, that men and women must be educated separately because women have had negative effects on men in many ways.

Kikuchi, in his book titled Japanese Education published in 1909, wrote that "Chinese philosophers seem not to have much

respect for women; while Buddhism regards women as sinful creatures, a temptation and snare, an obstacle to peace and holiness."¹⁴⁰

Japan's seclusion policy (Sakoku) began in 1630s. It was an attempt by the Tokugawa government to control Japan politically as well as socially. For the next 250 years, Japanese people were restricted from traveling to foreign countries and were bared from learning foreign ideas, mainly those of the West. Samurai warriors, who fought bravely to help establish the feudal government in Japan, were forced to learn not to fight but to become useful administrators in both national and local government organizations. The ancient Confucian text called *Rongo*, which was imported from China, and its ideas of morality became the primary literature for the Samurai to learn since it taught one's obedience toward the master. Tokugawa understanding of Confucianism also had some distinct ideas about how society should treat woman. A moral treatise called "Onna Daigaku" was created especially for the Samurai woman in 1672.¹⁴¹ Kaibara Ekken, one of most vigorous proponents of intellectual training of women in his era, taught women to deny her desires. He wrote,

"A woman has no particular Lord. She must look to her husband as her lord, and must serve him with all worship and reverence, not despising or thinking lightly of him. The great lifelong duty of a woman is obedience."¹⁴² A woman must be obedient not only to her parents but also to her husband, and to her son in her widowhood. Therefore, education for women was focused on becoming a good wife and a good educator of her children. Women were to learn Japanese traditional literatures and a classical Chinese language so that she may teach the *Rongo* to her children.¹⁴³ Women also were encouraged to learn "Kado" a form of traditional flower arrangement, "Sado" a form of tea ceremony, "Shyodo" a form of traditional Chinese calligraphy as well as the art of self defense called "Kyudo," a form of archery, "Naginata" a form of fencing using a very long sword and not to mention cooking and sewing.¹⁴⁴ So for a little Samurai girl, a very full agenda of learning was ahead of her. The education of samurai women was usually carried on at her house by her mother or a tutor. Schools for learning reading and writing for children did exist in the Edo era, but it was considered a lower-class custom.¹⁴⁵ Although a woman may possess great intellectual as well as physical ability, she was taught to hide such talents from men. Hiding one's talent was

in itself a virtue. It was very important for a woman to acquire supreme literal skills without losing her so-called femininity. Some woman's educational literatures explicitly stated that if you grow up to be a selfish woman, if you do not learn to obey; if you do not take care of your appearance, if you cannot cook or sew, you will become a divorcee.¹⁴⁶

Maybe the attitude of the Samurai towards women can be condensed in this one quote from a Japanese Samurai leader named, Sadanobu Matsudaira. He said, "When women are learned and clever in their speech, it is a sign that disturbance is not far off."¹⁴⁷

In 1868, after the fall of the Tokugawa government, Japan's new democratic government opened its diplomatic doors to foreign countries. Many Western ideologies and technologies were welcomed with open arms by the Japanese government. Along with many different cultures, American Christianity was imported. This import has resulted in the significant change in women's education in Japan. At the end of the Meiji Era that followed the Edo Era, American missionaries opened over 40 schools for girls in Japan.¹⁴⁸ Schools such as Ferris Academy in Yokohama, which was established in 1870, and later Woman's Union Christian College, and Kobe College.¹⁴⁹ It was after American Missionaries'

hard work to promote women's education in Japan, when the government realized the importance of women's education in Japan and started to establish women's schools. The first women's school opened by the Japanese government was the Tokyo Jogakko. It was established in 1872.¹⁵⁰ Private women's schools run by Japanese individuals were also being established in Japan. Umeko Tsuda, who was educated in the United States at the Bryn Mawr College, established the first women's College run by a Japanese in 1900.

Although the education of Japanese women began in the Meiji era, much of Japanese traditions, which oppressed women for many centuries, were brought to the United States by many Japanese men, and the treatment of women did not change dramatically. Most Japanese immigrant men lived difficult lives. Japanese immigrant women's lives were perhaps more difficult, working under the harsh and humiliating condition of poverty and under the watchful eyes of the often-cruel authority of their fathers and husbands.

Japanese Immigrants and their Religious Attitudes

In spite of their strong religious ties to Buddhism and

Shintoism, a large number of Japanese immigrants became Christians in the United States in the first several decades of their residence there. Throughout the history of the United States, most immigrants, including the Jews, southern Europeans with their Catholicism, and many from Muslim countries, brought their religion and religious customs with them to practice in the new land. Japanese, on the other hand, not only demonstrated very passive attitudes in bringing their traditional religion to the United States, but also showed a very open attitude in participating in a religion of their host country. Although, for one group of immigrants to convert to the dominant religion of the host country in a relatively short period of time may appear unusual in the context of U.S. history, if one looks at Japanese immigrants' religious background, it may not be such an unfathomable notion.

A distinctive feature of the Japanese religious history is the co-existence of separate religious traditions, namely Shintoism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Mahayana Buddhism. Many people, rather than belonging exclusively to one of them, were consciously affiliated with, or unconsciously participated in,

several of them at once. Traditionally, people participated in all four of the formative religious traditions at different moments of one's life.

Within the unity of a single religious tradition, a great diversity of religious attitudes may find expression. For example, Buddhism and Shinto include, within their traditions, the full spectrum of religious expressions, from the most popular belief to the most abstract philosophy. Thus, there are several levels of religiosity manifest simultaneously within a religious tradition. The Shinto shrines especially pride themselves on their unique rights and usages. Although Japan's militaristic government exploited Shinto for their own uses and used it as a tool of oppression during the first part of the 20th century, in history, Shinto, as the oldest indigenous religion of Japan, is largely responsible for creating mutually syncretistic religious attitudes rather than mutually exclusive ones.

There are numerous maxims in everyday Japanese language that involve dealing with authority. Several of them quickly come to my mind. They are, "Kateba kangun," "Nagaimononiwa makarero," and "Gouni ittewa gouni shitagae." "Kateba kangun" means "The winning party is always right." "Nagaimononiwa makarero" means

"if you can not defeat it join it." "Gouni ittewa gouni shitagae" means "You should always obey your local authority." These maxims quite possibly inform how Japanese have traditionally dealt with authority. And many understand that the religions of Japan and their teachings have nurtured these attitudes deep in the minds of the Japanese people for many centuries.

Shinto tradition and its pantheistic worldview created many gods throughout Japan. The story of "Nunakahime" in Kojiki, the oldest Shinto document, which was compiled around the 7th century AD, tells of a battle between different deities. The god who lost the battle was the god of the emperor's family and the one who ventured outside of his domain in order to expand his power. This story informs how Japanese have traditionally viewed gods or power in general. It is a deeply engraved collective religiosity or spirituality, which influences the Japanese to this day. Shintoism and its denial of the absolute along with Mahayana Buddhism's general openness to different religious ideas have helped predispose Japanese people to possess real openness, to tolerate difference, and to accept the new. On the other hand, the same predispositions can make the Japanese obedient and

submissive toward the powerful.

For the Japanese immigrants deeply embedded in this Japanese religiosity, accepting this new religion called Christianity may not have been so difficult.

Christian Mission and Japanese Immigrants

All major Christian denominations extended their hands to Asian immigrants. Chinese were the first Asians to encounter Christianity in the United States. Among major denominations, Methodists led the way to their westward march, establishing the Methodist Church Extension Society in 1864.¹⁵¹

A document of the Pacific Japanese Provisional Conference of Methodist Church reveals that three Japanese were converted in 1877 at the Howard Street Church, a Caucasian church in San Francisco.¹⁵² Though they were converted at this church, they were sent to the Chinese Methodist Episcopal Church and were baptized and received there. Those three understood English but did not understand Chinese, nor had connections to the Chinese community, but they were Asians, and thus they were sent to an Asian church. From the beginning, a pattern of segregation was present in Methodist as well as other denominational

missions.¹⁵³ The Japanese Gospel Society was organized in 1879 in San Francisco, sponsored by the Chinese Methodist Mission. Seven years later, when the number of Japanese increased, it started to rent a small building, becoming independent from the Chinese Mission. Four other Japanese Methodist churches were found in Oakland, Sacramento, Fresno, and in Vacaville before 1900. Many other churches were established after that in such places as Seattle, Alameda, Spokane, Riverside, Pueblo, Oxnard, and Bakersfield.

In addition to evangelism and providing religious instructions, Christian missions and churches attempted to meet many different needs of the Japanese immigrant community. One of most pressing needs for this community was learning the language. Many churches opened so-called English night schools, where Japanese immigrants would come to church after dark and learn English writing and conversation. Other churches provided employment opportunities to young Japanese immigrants. It was very common for a church to act as an employment agency, sending out a large number of houseboys commonly known as "mission-boys."¹⁵⁴

Some churches provided a place for young Japanese immigrants to get together away from undesirable activities. In many large cities, hundreds of Japanese labors gathered during non-farming season. Without any meaningful activities present, gambling and prostitution soon became the activity of choice of many. In order to provide more civil and productive environment for them, many Japanese community leaders asked various Christian denominations to establish programs specifically geared towards the younger Japanese immigrants.

On different occasions, churches were established to provide yet another type of safe-haven to the Japanese immigrants. In 1903, in Oxnard, California, about 1000 Japanese immigrant laborers struck and won a wage increase. This incident, however, created a very hostile environment for many Japanese because the community of Oxnard, and its people became quite upset and the relationship with them deteriorated. A Japanese labor leader, Kusaburo Baba asked churches for help. As a result, a language class with religious instruction was created for Japanese. One year later, this institution resulted in an establishment of a Japanese church.¹⁵⁵

Some churches became a place for people to socialize.

Clarence Nishizu, a participant in the California State University Fullerton Japanese American Oral History Project, recalls, in the 1920s, attending a social function, which was designed to provide young Japanese to get to know the opposite sex. He vividly remembered encouraging his friend to ask a young Japanese girl for a dance.¹⁵⁶

Being removed from established traditional Japanese society, even though Christianity was a foreign religion to most Japanese immigrants, churches played a very important role in their community and for some belonging to one became a matter of survival in a sometimes hostile environment.

In fact, an author who documented the Japanese Christians on the island of Hawaii painted an even more pragmatic picture for their conversion. He wrote, "A Japanese Christian rates a little higher with the white community than does a Buddhist, and this fact sometimes enters into a conversion. Some say a Christian finds it easier to borrow money at the bank."¹⁵⁷

There are no exact figures concerning the number of Japanese converts in the early days of immigration. However, a document

shows that in 1910, in Los Angeles, there were five Japanese Christian churches as opposed to one Buddhist temple. And in 1936, Frank Miyamoto, who surveyed the greater Seattle's Japanese population, found that out of about 2200 Japanese, 1200 Japanese attended Christian churches and 800 attended Buddhist churches.¹⁵⁸ Both figures seem to indicate the presence of a large number of Japanese Christian converts during the early years of their residence in the United States.

Buddhism and Japanese Community

Although most immigrants from Japan possessed some connection to Buddhism, establishment of Japanese Buddhist churches in the United States came at a very slow pace. Buddhists who emigrated neither possessed many resources to establish churches in the United States nor was the leadership of Buddhist priests available for them. To make things even tougher for the Buddhists immigrants, many Japanese government officials, for the fear of jeopardizing U.S. and Japan relationship, opposed both missionary activities and the establishment of Japanese Buddhist churches.

The U.S. government, however, did not oppose Japanese

Buddhist missionaries and their religious activities. In 1899, two Buddhist monks were allowed to go to the United States in order to give "spiritual guidance."¹⁵⁹ The establishment of Buddhist churches soon followed in San Francisco and in Sacramento. In 10 years, over 10 Buddhist churches were founded, mostly in cities along the west coast.¹⁶⁰

As many Christian churches for the Japanese carried out different social functions in order to serve the Japanese immigrant community, Buddhist churches were asked to do the same, which included activities that were not a part of their traditional functions of Buddhism in Japan, such as Sunday schools and weddings. Buddhists had to improvise, so they developed a style of Buddhist weddings, which was usually reserved for Shintoism in Japan. They also created Sunday schools for religious instructions, whereas in Japan, Buddhist temples were attended only a few times a year. In Buddhist Sunday schools, they even taught western style songs for children by arranging existing Christian hymns such as Jesus Loves Me. Using the same melody line, they sang, "Buddha loves me this I know, for the sutra tells me so."¹⁶¹

Buddhists also called their temples "churches" in order to

give people the impression that theirs was a viable alternative to Christian churches in the United States. Although with a slower start and smaller in numbers, many more Buddhist churches were established and became an important part of many Japanese immigrant communities and most importantly, Japanese Christians and Buddhists co-existed peacefully and amicably.¹⁶²

Christian Church and Internment

Rev. Toru Matsumoto, an ordained minister of the Reformed Church in America who spent about a year in the internment camp, published a book titled "Beyond Prejudice" in 1946, a year after the end of WWII, recalling the role of Christian churches during the internment years.¹⁶³ This book contained many firsthand accounts of Rev. Matsumoto, as well as the results of many interviews he conducted with Japanese and American lay Christians and leaders. He describes different living conditions of the internment camps and how churches were permitted to operate in those special settings. The theme of the book, however, seems very clear, which is the harmonious existence of Japanese and American Christians in spite of the gross injustice committed by the government of the United States. Instead of focusing on

heartbreaks and sufferings, the book is filled with heartwarming incidents of American Christians helping Japanese Christians in assembly centers and in internment camps, such as Christmas gifts that were sent to Japanese in camps, and how some Caucasian churches helped to find jobs as well as living arrangements for many Japanese Christians. The book also talks about the unanimity of different American denominations, including conservatives and liberals, to help the Japanese Christians.

Others, however, paint somewhat different pictures in describing the attitude of American Christian denominations and churches. Most authors, who detailed the incarceration of Japanese during WWII, seem to agree that among many Christian denominations in the United States, the Mennonites were very vocal in their opposition to the internment. However, very little about other major Christian denominations and churches were written in their books. An author describes the involvement of the church this way, "When evacuation threatened, most of the non-Japanese organizations that expressed opposition were church-related, but the main bodies of the churches themselves never exerted anything like their full power to prevent internment."¹⁶⁴

CHAPTER 7

Research Setting

History of the Church

Participants of this research are all members of one church in Southern California. The congregation is predominantly Japanese American with membership of about 350, making it one of the largest Japanese American churches in Southern California. The percentage of Japanese American members is about 90%. Other ethnicities include Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Caucasian.

In 1904, two Caucasian churches in the area recognized the need for mission work oriented towards young bachelors from Japan who labored in the celery fields. A mission was established as a joint undertaking of two churches, providing a place for religious instructions as well as learning English conversation skills. A mission building was built on an acre of land donated by a Japanese Farmer. The mission also became a place for the Japanese immigrants, both for Issei and Nisei (first and second generation Japanese), to socialize and have a sense of community.

In 1930, the Mission became a church. During World War II, most members were removed by the U.S. military and put into the internment camps in different parts of the United States. The activity of the church ceased for nearly three years. After the war, although some members were able to come back to the same church, many decided to relocate. Some moved to different states, others decided to go back to Japan. The church continued to minister at the same location until 1965, when the members decided to relocate the church to a larger building and purchased an old church at the present location about 10 miles away from the original location, where the sanctuary was bigger to accommodate the growing congregation.

During the 1930s and 1940s, the makeup of the congregation moved from predominantly Japanese-speaking to predominantly English-speaking, as well as from predominantly Japanese immigrants to U.S.-born Japanese Americans. Both the Japanese-speaking and English-speaking congregation still exist to this day and have separate worship services on Sunday mornings. The generational make-up of the church has evolved from having only the first generation Japanese immigrant to having the second, third, fourth, fifth and even some sixth generation Japanese

Americans. The leadership of the church, including the elders and the deacons, has been moved from the second generation to the third generation in the last several decades, and some fourth generation Japanese American members are starting to occupy the leadership positions.

Mostly Japanese American male ministers have occupied the theological leadership of this church. In last 15 years, ministers who characterize themselves as conservative or evangelical have occupied the leadership position of this church, emphasizing the traditional religious instructions and evangelist out-reach programs. More than 95% of all elders of the church, who are elected by the entire church body, are also men.

Church Affiliation

Since the beginning, Japanese churches tend to be much smaller than their Caucasian counter parts, making it necessary to share resources with other churches, in many instances even over denominational lines. One of the most prominent Japanese para-church organizations is called the Japanese Evangelical Missionary Society or JEMS, which was established in 1950. The

leadership of the JEMS has been occupied by people such as Rev. Paul Nagano and Rev. Sam Tomomura. The church, where this research is being conducted, has been an active participant in the JEMS organization from its conception and has been supporting it financially. Every summer, JEMS sponsors a Christian retreat at the Mt. Hermon conference center outside San Jose, attended mostly by Japanese American Christians from many western states and from many different Protestant Christian denominations.

Senior Members

Among all Asian American ethnic groups the Japanese American, due mostly to its immigration history, community has the largest percentage of people who are over 65 years and older. Most Japanese churches have, within its membership, a considerable number of elderly compared to other Asian churches. The latest church congregational study conducted in 1999 reveals that about 20% of all congregations are above 65, which is actually well below the U.S. average.

At this church, several programs and activities have been created for the senior members to participate. One of the most attended programs is the Wednesday morning senior ministry

gathering, which is attended by about 70 seniors. This and other church functions that are attended by seniors, where social interactions are taking place, will be the main setting of observation for this research, which will be detailed in the later chapters.

CHAPTER 8

Observation of Naturally Occurring Social Interactions

One of many important research observations in this study comes from observations of naturally occurring social interactions of the elderly Japanese American Christians. A church program called the Wednesday Senior Fellowship, which all the seniors who have been interviewed for this study have participated in, was observed extensively by myself.

Descriptions and Observations of the Senior Fellowship

This program was created in 1997 to provide a place for the elderly members of the church, as well as for their friends and acquaintances, to get together and have fellowship at the church. It is a church-sponsored program which is led by a lay leader, an elder of the church, who himself is an elderly Christian. The senior fellowship is a year-round program with a two-month summer break. Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter weeks are also time off from the program.

Many seniors who attend this fellowship are members of this church. Some are members of other churches and for some, this fellowship is the only church functions that they attend. The gender makeup of this group is one-sided. There are over 60 women and less than 10 men. There are 4 married couples that attend the fellowship regularly; most others are either widows or widowers.

This fellowship is supported by a group of volunteers from the church. The volunteer staff consists of: one overall program leader who is an elder of the church; one male staff member who is responsible for giving devotions; one male staff member who is responsible for collecting lunch money; one female staff member who is responsible for leading songs; one female staff member who is responsible for the physical exercise and outdoor activities; and six female kitchen workers who are elderly members of this church themselves. I, the researcher, am also a volunteer for this fellowship, who helps other staff members in setting up the chairs and tables before the meetings and vacuuming the floor and wiping tables afterwards. During the program, however, I sat among the seniors and quietly observed things around me.

The leadership as well as the teaching and treasury positions of this fellowship which some might see as key positions, are occupied by male members of the church, although the overall participation of women in this ministry is close to eight to one. The leader of this fellowship is a very well-respected person by all the senior participants of this fellowship. I, in my three years of involvement, have never heard any negative comments about this person. In a way, he is a strong father-figure to many people.

The fellowship starts at 10 am and continues until about 1 pm. Here is a typical time line and activities of this fellowship, which is held in the church fellowship hall.

10:00 am	Greeting Time: Coffee & Tea
10:15 am	Introducing New Comers, Opening Prayer
10:30 am	Devotions & Sing Hymns
10:45 am	Stretching & Break
11:00 am	Presentation/Activity/Entertainment
Noon	Lunch & Fellowship
1:00 pm	Goodbye

Seniors start to arrive at the church around 9:45 am. Coffee and tea, as well as some snacks, are prepared by the volunteer

kitchen staff. About 70 seniors who attend this meeting almost always sit at the same table with their close friends. The seating arrangements of the senior fellowship have been determined by the seniors themselves.

Several staff volunteers have, in many instances, tried to encourage seniors to sit at different tables with different seniors to meet new people, by arranging the seating by birthdays, cities where they live, and their initials. I have observed many seniors complaining, though not in a harsh manner, wanting to sit with their friends. I also have observed that, when the seating was arranged by the fellowship staff, the amount of conversation was less than usual at each table, and many seniors often looked at other tables where their friends were sitting. It also seems that church members and non-church members tend to sit at different tables. Men who come to the fellowship with their wives usually sit with their wives. Other men, mostly widowers, tend to sit at one table.

One newcomer has indicated to me that after about three months of attending the meeting, she has yet to make a friend in this fellowship. It seems that for a newcomer to break into the already

established circles of acquaintances is very difficult.

The fellowship officially starts at 10:15, with the introduction of new visitors to the meeting. Three questions are always asked to new visitors by the program leader, namely to state their name, the place where they were born and the place where they grew up. In many instances, the visitors have identified themselves, in addition to answering those three questions, by stating which internment camp they were placed at during World War II. I have observed that one of the most common ways to form a sense of connection, among the seniors who were interned during the war, is to identify the location of the camp where they were. In many cases, conversations between people thrive with talking about mutual acquaintances, assigned barracks, and other common experiences.

After the introduction of new comers, the program leader will open the floor for taking prayer requests from the seniors. For most of the time, the requests are about the health conditions of their friends and relatives as well as of themselves. Medical terms such as cancer, heart conditions, surgery, and hospitalization are heard frequently in those requests. The

leader will then pray for those people and their conditions. The prayer usually focuses on asking God for healing and comfort. Announcements of deceased friends and family members usually take place during this time. In the three years of my participation in this fellowship, prayer requests concerning the health of senior members have always been the main focus of prayer during the prayer time.

Following the prayer time, a male staffer will give a short devotion of about five minutes by reading a passage, of about 300 words, from a small booklet called The Upper Room. This booklet is a daily reading that contains a Bible passage and practical lessons related to the passage. Authors of this booklet consist of mostly conservative pastors who focus on characteristics of Christian God, and how God influences the lives of individuals.

After this short devotion, a female staff member with a guitar leads the group in singing hymns. Two years ago, a younger person, in her twenties, became a new song leader and brought with her praise songs that are very new and foreign to many seniors. Many of them objected to this change and requested that they sing

more traditional hymns. The song leader complied and now, only traditional hymns are sang at the meetings.

At 10:45, for about 10 minutes, a female staffer with some experience in physical therapy leads the group in exercises that are specially catered to the elderly. Immediately following this exercise, perhaps once or twice a month, a female volunteer, will give so called "helpful hints," sharing ideas such as hygiene and house cleaning tips. The exercise staff will then announce that there will be a five-minute "potty break."

Special programs are planned every week for the time between 11:00am and noon. One of the most popular programs, especially among the elderly women, is the crafting. Crafting often involves a Japanese theme, creating origami crafts, making paper dolls with a kimono, or experiencing traditional Japanese painting called the sumi-e. Once or twice a month, medical doctors from local hospitals are invited to speak at the fellowship. Lecture topics are related to the health concerns of elderly, such as the prevention of heart disease, diabetic treatments and the prevention of falls. On other Wednesdays, singers and singing

groups are invited from other churches and organizations to entertain the seniors.

When the church is unable to find outside lecturers and entertainers or have crafting projects, short films and documentaries are shown to the seniors on a big-screen television. Documentary film titles include Everest: the Challenge, Treasures of the Titanic, and Breaking the Sound Barrier, just to name a few.

However on three separate occasions in the last three years, Japanese American history-related short films were shown to this group. Two were documentaries on the internment experience, and one was about a Japanese athlete before the World War II who encountered various types of racism. Many seniors appeared to be very interested in these particular films, and many discussions and the sharing of personal experiences occurred during the lunch hour at different tables. However, no formal discussion time for the whole group to talk about their reactions or process their feelings was held. It was not a conscious decision to avoid the discussion on the part of the program leader. He personally experienced the internment camp and had a very emotional reaction. It was just that there was no time available

to accommodate such a discussion. In retrospect, some group discussion, by extending the lunch hour, might yield some beneficial results to help the seniors express their feelings.

From noon to 1:00pm is a lunch hour. Seniors pay three dollars when they enter the fellowship hall to attend the fellowship. A volunteer who is in charge of the treasury will then gather the money and go purchase take-out lunches for the group. The lunch menu includes Japanese food, Chinese food, Italian food, and sandwiches. The menu planned by the kitchen staff focuses on variety and readily digestible items. Two self-serve lines are formed, and one may take as much food as one may wish. Lunch is eaten at the same table the seniors have been sitting at during the program, which seats about eight people. Again, most seniors prefer to eat their lunch with the same people.

Conversations Among the Seniors

Topics of lunch conversations at each table vary, however, it seems that the issue of health usually dominates the tables. It was very interesting to observe that, although the language of the seniors is English, several Japanese words were used often

in the context of conversations concerning the health issues. The most often used word by some are "shikataganai" and "gaman."

The word "shikataganai" means, "it cannot be helped" in Japanese. It is a common word in Japanese and is usually used in the context of facing difficulties that are very hard to overcome. The word was used in a conversation this way. "It is very difficult for me to walk a long distance." "Shikataganai. You are old."

The word "gaman" means, "patience or endurance." It was often used in a verb form "gaman-suru," or in the form of command "gaman-shinasai" meaning "be patient." Conversations such as, "I have a lot of pain in my legs." "Gaman-shinasai!" took place between some seniors.

Being Japanese, I was really puzzled to hear so often, out of so many Japanese words, these words that are very pessimistic in nature. However, after having examined many documents on the topic of Japanese American history, I have learned that these exact words have been often used in the context of the Japanese internment and war-related difficulties. In fact, most books on Japanese American history will list, in its subject index, these Japanese words.

As expected, many books differed in the explanation of these words. Some authors explain that these words show the often pessimistic and docile attitude of Japanese people who did not put up much resistance in the midst of immense social injustice during World War II.¹⁶⁵ Others see these words as a testimony to the patience and the endurance of Japanese immigrants, which was displayed by many in overcoming the difficulties and the challenges that plagued their community over the years.¹⁶⁶ Yet others, especially those with a psychological viewpoint, explain these words as a part of Japanese people's psychological defense mechanism to endure hardships.¹⁶⁷ These different views will be examined in the analysis and theorizing phase of this research.

CHAPTER 9

The Case Study

Selection of Participants

As it was indicated in the methodology section of this paper, the standardized, open-ended interviews were conducted in this study to gather qualitative data from a group of elderly Japanese American Christian women. "Homogeneous sampling" was employed, in order to limit participation.

Six conditions were therefore applied: 1) the participant is a female, 2) she was born in the United States, 3) she was born to Japanese parents, 4) she lived in the United States for most of her life, 5) she is over 65 years of age, and 6) she acknowledges herself to be a Christian for most of her years.

A pilot survey was conducted on the people who attended the Wednesday Senior Fellowship at the church. They were asked if they fit the above description. Out of about 60 Japanese American Christian women over the age of sixty-five, there were 22 people who fit the participation requirement of this research. Out of

those 22 people, only 10 were willing and available to participate in this study.

I had originally planned on using a video camera to record the interviews. However, I had decided not to continue with the idea, since I encountered many negative responses from this attempt.

Several perspective participants, after initially agreeing to be interviewed, declined to take part, after learning that they would be videotaped. Several women participants indicated to me that the interview must take place after "I get my hair done." Many women were concerned about being recorded, even after I assured many of them that the videotape would not be shown to anybody else.

One interview was started with a video camera. However, since the participant seemed very uncomfortable and very conscious about the presence of the video camera, I felt that it was too distracting and switched to a small cassette recorder that I also brought with me. After this first interview, I purchased a small microphone with a long cord, so that the recording device would be away from the participants during the interview. It seemed

that a microphone and a tape recorder were still distracting to some of the women.

Out of 10 participants, three were very cooperative and agreed to participate at my first request. However, contrary to my expectations, it was very difficult to gather the participants for this study. Since I had been attending the Wednesday Senior Fellowship at the church for the last three years and befriended many, I expected that I would receive more active cooperation in this study, but this was not the case. Many women declined to participate, although politely, stating, "I have nothing to say." I had to be very persistent and encouraging, but at the same time be polite and not too forceful, in order to gather 10 participants.

Of course the reticence to participate in an interview and the hesitation to be videotaped, on the part of many elderly Japanese American Christian women, is considered an important qualitative finding in itself to be analyzed later.

Transcripts

The length of interviews averaged around two hours. Taped

answers were listened to by myself several times and were transcribed. Field notes were also taken during the interview. Only a small portion of the interviews appear in this dissertation as verbatim quotes. Verbatim quotes that are recounted in this dissertation were selected in an attempt to show: the flow of the interview, attitudes and emotions of the interviewees, key concepts and words that were repeated many times by the interviewees, and concepts and words that were unique to a particular interviewee. Names of the participants were coded in order to safeguard their privacy.

Mrs. A

Mrs. A is an 88 year-old widow who has been a member of the church for over 50 years. She was approached several times by me to be a part of this study, however each time she indicated that there are better candidates and gave the names of several people who are elderly Japanese American Christians like herself. She also said, "My life is not really interesting and I have nothing to say." In declining to be interviewed, she was very polite and spoke softly, however, repeatedly stated that she would not be a good candidate. After another phone call, she

reluctantly agreed to participate in this study. The interview was conducted at her home.

When I was invited in to her home, she apologized for what she called "this messy room." She then offered me a cup of Japanese green tea, saying that, "It is probably not good enough for a real Japanese person." After several sips, she repeatedly asked, "Is it ok? Is it strong enough?" I had to assure several times that the tea was good.

To the first question asking about difficult and/or challenging experience in her life looking back.

Mrs. A: My mother became a farmer, just as I became one after I became a farmer's wife. And, well, my mother had very difficult time learning about farming, because she was from the city. My father had to teach her everything about farming.

Researcher: So the farming was very difficult for you, after your self became a farmer's wife?

Mrs. A: Well it wasn't difficult, but my father in-law was very hard worker, he came from a farming village in Japan you know, and he provided everything for us. After he became older, my husband, because he was the oldest son, had to provide for the whole family. After the war, we were very fortunate to be able to go back to the same farm coming back from the internment camp.

Researcher: Was the internment camp very difficult for you.

Mrs. A: No, one thing we were very lucky was that many

of my friends and relatives were able to live at the same camp. We also were with many acquaintances in the camp. On top of that, we were at the Jerome, Arkansas, and many people say that our camp was the best, because it was closest to Washington D.C. I heard that other people in other camps, like Idaho and Wyoming, they had more difficult time.

Researcher: "So your experience at the camp was not bad?"

Mrs. A: Well, I remember, they had really slimy water, you know the soft water. I really did not like that. But you know, I was single and care free. The camp was kind a fun.

I then proceeded to the second question.

Researcher: What helped you to over come some of the difficulties in your younger days?

Mrs. A: Well, I can say that I never had real difficulty in my life. Compared to other Japanese ladies, I think I had a very good life.

To my next question, she responded about events in her life that influenced her spirituality.

Mrs. A: I remember attending church when I was 10 years old, and it is funny how things you learn when you were that small sticks with you, remembering, you know, songs and Bible verses. I still remember meeting a real nice Caucasian Christian lady at the church. She was really nice. Because she did not have a family, she invited my family for Christmas, and it was really nice. She

was a very rich lady and helped my family a lot. She told my mother how to raise children and what to wear to the church. I still remember that she gave me a small doll for Christmas. Things like that just stay in you for life.

The next question was about difficulties and challenges in her present life.

Mrs. A: Well, my son is in his 50s and he still is not married, and that worries me a little bit. But in a way, it is a blessing because he lives with me and you know when you are old it is good to have some one in your home. That is the only problem that I have.

I again asked if she has had any other difficulties in her life.

Mrs. A: Well, no, I can't say that I do because I have been healthy, except for several surgeries I went through, but you cannot help that and you just have to accept things like that. But, I am grateful to God.

The next question was asked. "What is helping you in your current life experiences."

Mrs. A: You know I go to church, listen to sermons, and I am grateful for that. You know the other day, the Reverend spoke about unconditional love, you know, and I was really struck by that. When you live, you have your ups and downs, but you really have to be patient because love is everything, you know.

Researcher: Looking back on your life, what has impacted your spirituality the most?

Mrs. A: Well, ever since I was five years old, I went to church and even though I do not know much about the Bible, I am a faithful Christian. I think it is too late for me to learn much about it, but ah, I at least attend church regularly. And my faith never changed after all these years. After my husband, who by the way died about 15 years ago, told me to do, I even served in the church as a deacon, even though I did not know much about church.

Then the last question was asked.

Researcher: How do you see your spiritual future?

Mrs. A: Well, I have two sons and they take good care of me, and I am very thankful to the lord for now. But you know you have no idea what is going to happen, you just have to accept what ever as the will of God and hope for the best.

Researcher: Anything else you want to say?

Mrs. A: Well, I am very happy, and church makes me happy the most.

With this question, I finished the interview. Mrs. A then asked me, "How did I do? Was I of any help to you?" I had to assure her that it was a great interview. At the doorway, she suggested

that I would go to other church members' homes because they will be more helpful for the study.

Throughout the interview, Mrs. A never stated anything negative. She was very certain that she never experienced any real difficulties and challenges in her life. She also repeatedly stated that she was very thankful to God for providing everything. I seemed that God, her father, her father-in-law and her husband, shared a similar place in her life, a place of authority. And she stated that she does not understand why things happen some times, she needed to accept the situation and be thankful.

At the same time, she was not sure if she was being helpful to me, and if she was doing a good interview. She also was very concerned with the cup of tea she prepared for me.

Mrs. B

Mrs. B is an 82 year-old widow who lives alone in a condominium. She has been a member of the church for over 50 years. She was a newlywed when she and her husband were removed from their home and sent to an internment camp in Poston 1 in Arizona.

She seemed very surprised when I called and asked her to participate in the project. However, she agreed immediately and

invited me to have lunch with her on the day of the interview. When I arrived at her home, she repeatedly thanked me for coming out, even though it was I who asked her to participate in the interview. She also had prepared a Japanese lunch, saying that "I ordered take-out from a Japanese restaurant, because what I make is probably not authentic." She also served green tea and asked me, if it was strong enough. She said, "The way I make the tea is probably not the right way."

The interview began with the first question about some difficulties and challenges in her past.

Mrs. B: You know I was adopted, and my parents took really good care of me. You know in the Japanese culture, if you are adopted, some will say, oh, I feel sorry for her. But you know what, I was perfectly happy.

She then started to describe her family and how nice they were. I once again asked her if there were some difficult experiences in her life that she can share.

Mrs. B: Well, the internment was not bad either. You know I just got married right before the internment. My husband feared that if he did not marry me, he would be separated from me and put into a different camp, so he proposed to me and we were married right away. So when I got to the camp, it was our honeymoon and if you are just married, all you care about is to be with your spouse. So I really was in the seventh heaven. I still remember, every Monday was the movie day, which was

shown in an open air theater. So my husband and I grabbed a blanket and saw the movie. And every month, they had a dance night. So, for me, it was fun. And I remember, a lot of people complaining about the food. But food improved as the time went on.

Researcher: Was it hot during the summer at the camp.

Mrs. B: Yes it was hot during the summer and very cold during the winter. But you know, we were able to purchase a lot of goods through the Sears Catalog, you know like J.C. Penny. And we gave a lot of business to them. We were all paid 16 dollars a month working in the camp. And if you were in the place of authority, like my husband was, you get paid 19 dollars. He was in charge of recreation in the camp. So we saved up our money for many months and purchased a baby crib from the Sears Catalog. One with a net, I remember, because there were a lot of mosquitoes and I did not want my baby to get mosquito bits.

I asked one more time, wanting to get to the second question, if she had experienced some difficulties in her past.

Researcher: Were there anything in your life looking back that you can say was difficult?

Mrs. B: You know, to be honest with you, not really. Because I have been blessed by God so much. He always looks after me and I know that. I think we were poor growing up, but I never felt poor.

I then asked the next question.

Researcher: "How do you see, in looking back, your spirituality impacted with all your experience?"

Mrs. B: I don't know why, but since I was very small, I was attracted to church for some reason. I guess it was one way to meet people. So, I went to church a lot, but I say this, I did not study the Bible that much, I guess I had to study the Bible as kids, but as an adult, I am a little bit ashamed of my self for not attending Bible classes more.

Researcher: Was there a time you really thought about your spirituality?

Mrs. B: (after a short pause), No, to be honest with you. But I always have felt that God is there and he is protecting me.

I then proceeded to the next question, which was about her present experience and difficulties.

Researcher: Please describe some of the difficulties you are experiencing now.

Mrs. B: No, I am having a time of my life.

Researcher: Well if you don't mind me asking this but, when did your husband passed away? How was it a difficult experience for you?

Mrs. B: Of course, it was 8 years ago. And that was in God's

time, I guess. I miss him, but you know he was a great husband. He did everything, provided for me and kids.

The next question was about her present spirituality. I phrased the question this way.

Researcher: "Do you have any experience recently that really impacted you spiritually?"

Mrs. B: "You know, its funny. There isn't anything that I can think about."

It seemed that whenever I used the word, spirituality, Mrs. B was having hard time relating to that question.

Mrs. B: But you know what, I feel really blessed by God and that is why I go to church, to thank him. And if I don't go, Bachiga Ataru. You know. (Bachiga Ataru, is a common Japanese phrase and means that God will punish you for being ungrateful.)

Researcher: How have your experiences impacted you spiritually, during the journey of your life?

Mrs. B: You know, I was one of the first deacons for our church after the war, and I really learned to serve God there. Oh, and I remembered, several years ago, my friend invited me to this church that was a charismatic. Is that the word? The church and people were crying as

they prayed, and being very emotional. I felt very uncomfortable in that church, because I am not used to that sort of thing.

The last question was about the future and her spirituality.

Mrs. B: Well, I have not really thought about my future, you know I probably do not have many years left. But, like I said, I am having the time of my life. I am a very simple person. I have not done anything that was great, or anything real bad had happened in my life ether.

In order to encourage her to think about her future, I asked,

Researcher: "Do you feel secure about your future?"

Mrs. B: "Oh, yes. I just sold a property and that should help."

With this question, the interview ended. She said, "Well I hope I was helpful. I am sorry that I did not have more interesting things to say."

Her interview was very similar to the interview of Mrs. A. When she was asked if she had experienced any difficulties of challenges, she would only answer by sharing her good experiences. She also repeatedly stated that she was very thankful to God for her good life.

On the other hand, she was concerned about her Japanese-

ness and tried very hard to please me, a Japanese national from Japan. It was very interesting to note that she made a same comment about the tea she served as Mrs. A did.

Mrs. C

Mrs. C is a 78 year-old woman who lives with her husband who is an 81 year-old. Mrs. C suffers from reoccurring cancer and is currently undergoing chemotherapy. They have been married for over 40 years. Mrs. C was somewhat cooperative in participating in this study. She agreed to be interviewed at my second request on the phone.

The interview with Mrs. C occurred at her home. When I was invited in to their home, I was offered a cup of Japanese tea and some fruits. Mrs. C was concerned that the tea was strong enough for me and asked several times, "Is it OK?"

The interview started after some small talk.

Researcher: What were some of your difficult and challenging experiences in your past?

Mrs. C: Well, I was the youngest in my family, and I remember my mother being sick all the time. It was very difficult for my family and for me too. I was worried all the time if she will get over her illness. She died while in the surgery when I was still young. And losing

her was very difficult for us. So my father stepped up and taught me things. I was also helped by many others and I am grateful for that.

Researcher: What helped you to over come that difficulty?

Mrs. C: I guess my family and my Japanese neighbor friends. The church, Buddhist church, did not help at all. No one came from the church to our home to visit or anything. It was all up to my father and my brothers to over come this challenge I guess. I was kind of angry at them, because you know, my mother died. And I was thinking, if I get away from this town, I will become a Christian.

Researcher: Why did you think that you wanted to become a Christian?

Mrs. C: Because in the Buddhist churches, they only spoke Japanese and I did not understand any of it. But in Christian churches, you get to hear English, and I would be able to understand. That is probably why. And after I got married and I was going through a difficult divorce, I prayed to God to save me. The prayer really helped.

Researcher: In your present life what difficulties and challenges are you experiencing.

Mrs. C: Well, my husband and I both had and still have serious illnesses. This is my fourth time having this cancer. And if I didn't stay strong, I don't think I would be here today. And I try to forget about it. If you have pain, that is something else. But my chemotherapy has been working well. I don't have side

effects. It is amazing that I have no side effects. So I thank the Lord everyday and all the friends and people who support me and pray for me. So, I will just give it to God's hands. If God wants to continue my life, I will accept that and if God want me home, I will accept that too. I can not ask for anything more.

Researcher: How do you see your spiritual future?

Mrs. C: Well, I have been praying to God, and if it is his will, I would like to see my grand daughter's graduation in two years. And after that, my future is in the Lord's hands.

Whenever she was asked about difficulties and challenges in her life, she would share some incidents, however she immediately offered an explanation of how she was helped. She also appeared somewhat nervous throughout the interview. At the end of the interview, she repeatedly asked I, "Was I helpful to you?"

Mrs. D

Mrs. D was probably the most reluctant participant of all ten women. She repeatedly told me "I have nothing to say" and politely declined to participate. She finally agreed to participate, after her friend encouraged her and told to "Help him." Mrs. D is a 90 year-old widow who lost her husband 22 years

ago and a very active volunteer at the church. The interview took place at the church, since I sensed reluctance in her voice about the interview taking place in her home when she was asked to participate in this interview over the phone.

The interview started with a concerning difficult and/or challenging experiences in her past.

Mrs. D: "You know, the depression was very hard for my parents. They have just moved from Japan and had to work so hard to support the family. It was very difficult for my brothers and sisters also."

Researcher: Was it difficult for you too?

Mrs. D: Well, my father was a hard worker and provided for the family. I really thank him for that.

Mrs. D's focus was clearly on the family members and not on her self. This was true throughout the interview.

Researcher: What helped you to cope with those difficulties?

Mrs. D: Prayers, reading the Bible, and of course the church helped a lot. We all (family members) attended the church together and it really helped all of us.

Researcher: In what ways?

She replied by describing many people who helped her family.

The third question was about her experience and the spiritual

impact.

Mrs. D: My father was a really devout Christian and he prayed everyday, and sang a hymn in his room everyday. He told the family, God will take care of us and if we have only a slice of bread, we need to be thankful. As a Christian, I guess, I wanted to become like him. My husband was also a very religious man, I learned a lot from him. I also worked with the pastor of this church (She was speaking about a former pastor), and I learned a lot from him too. My husband was ill for many years, and the Reverend came to the hospital many times to talk to us. He was a very compassionate man and I learned a lot from him.

Researcher: Was your husband's passing very difficult for you?

Mrs. D: Yes, but I learned that it was God's will so I accepted it because God is good and faithful to us.

The next question focused on the present challenges and difficulties.

Mrs. D: I don't have too many challenges. I am busy. I volunteer here at the church and I enjoy it very much. I really don't have many great challenges.

Researcher: What helps you in your everyday life?

Mrs. D: God helps.

Researcher: How does God help you?

Mrs. D: He is my Lord. He is my guardian. He is my shepherd. I ask God everyday for his guidance and his protection. And, (long pause) I can't think of anything else.

Researcher: Looking back to your younger days and looking at yourself now, what changes do you see in your life spiritually?

Mrs. D: Well, I say until I graduated from high school, I was guided by my parents. And then after that, I was led by God, with my husband and pastor's help.

Concerning her spiritual future, she answered, "I hope I can stay healthy and continue to volunteer at the church to stay helpful to the church."

Mrs. D's answers were very short and she often appeared very nervous through out the interview, and especially when she was asked to talk about herself. She often started her answer with an experience of someone else rather than her own. The interview ended more quickly than the other interviews and when it was over, she said, "I am so glad it is over."

Mrs. E

Mrs. E is a 78 year-old widow who recently lost her husband. She suffers from a back injury and is not able to drive or move around very well. Shortly before and during WWII, she spent five years in Tokyo. She also was a very reluctant participant in this study. As she was approached by me, she repeatedly stated "I have nothing to say, and I will not be a good interviewee." After several phone calls and encouragements, she agreed to be interviewed at her home.

She offered me a cup of tea and some Japanese traditional snacks. Before the interview started, she handed me several sheets of typed paper.

Mrs. E: This is what my husband wrote about us several years ago before he passed away. This should tell a good deal about me. He was a good writer, but I am not much of anything.

Her husband's writing was a chronicle of events, describing the life journey of him and of his wife, Mrs. E. I promised that I would look at her husband's writings later and started the interview.

The first question was about some difficult or challenging experiences in her past.

Mrs. E: The transition to Japanese school from American school was a challenge. Right before the war, of course my parents did not know that the war would break out, my brother and I were sent to Japan with our mother to learn Japanese.

Researcher: Why was the transition difficult?

Mrs. E: Oh, because the Japanese schools were not easy like the American schools. I found it very difficult. But my father wanted what was best for me and my brother, and he expected us to do well in school. So we studied very hard, then, you know, that the war broke out and we couldn't come back home even if we wanted to.

Researcher: How was your experience of the war difficult for you in Japan?

Mrs. E: During the war, some kids were mean. They made fun of me and my brother, because they knew that we were from the United States. And of course all the bombs falling from the sky, it was scary, although we moved out from Tokyo later, so it was not too bad compared to Tokyo and what some of my friends went through. We came back a year after the war. During the war, my father was here and was in the internment camp. So after we got here, just for a little while, we stayed in a church until we found a place to stay. And then we moved to San Francisco. And there, I met my husband. I was in a city college and he was already working for the government.

Mrs. E was very detailed in her recollection of events. However, she shared very little about her own experience and how it was difficult.

Researcher: What helped you to overcome those difficulties during and after the war?

Mrs. E: Well, I prayed a lot, even though I was not a Christian at that time. You know, when you get into very desperate situation, you have to have something to hang on to. Even though I was not a Christian, my father was. He was a farmer before the war and so he could not attend churches regularly. But I remember my father humming hymns and praying. I probably picked up my praying from him.

Researcher: How did prayer help you?

Mrs. E: I don't know, but it was something my father did, so I felt more secure, I guess.

Researcher: What experience impacted your spirituality the most, looking back?

Mrs. E: Well, church did, I think. I had many Buddhist friends but, my father was a Christian, so I went to Church, and I met a lot of nice people there. I attended church regularly and did a lot of chores around the church. But, I did not attend Bible studies much. I was not a faithful Christian back then.

Researcher: In your present life, what difficulties or

challenges are you experiencing?

Mrs. E: Well, health is my main concern, I guess. I have bad back and bad knees. I cannot drive anymore, and I cannot do a lot of things for the church anymore and it is frustrating.

Knowing that her husband had passed away just recently, I asked,

Researcher: Was your husband's passing difficult for you?

Mrs. E: Oh, he was sick for many years, when he first became ill; he was only 52 years old.

Mrs. E went on and chronicled the history of her husband's illness. In an attempt to encourage Mrs. E to focus on her own experiences, I asked,

Researcher: How did your husband's passing impact your spiritually?

Mrs. E: Well, the Reverend came to our house and came to visit him at the hospital many times and that helped us a lot. Many people prayed for us too. And I know that without prayers, we cannot live.

Researcher: When you prayed, did you have question about your husband's passing?

Mrs. E: No, because I know that it was God's will.

Researcher: How do you see your spiritual future?

Mrs. E: Well, I just live day by day. And when I go, you know to the better place, I will see my husband and my family. That will be nice.

Researcher: How do you see your spiritual future, before you get to the better place?

Mrs. E: Well, I would be lying if I do not worry about my future. What if I fell and no one is around? But you know, I try not to worry about it, because there is nothing I can do.

Researcher: Are there anything else you would like to say?

Mrs. E: Well, I have a question for you, because you are a minister.

She seemed somewhat hesitant. She continued,

Mrs. E: Well, I have many Buddhist family members and friends and what I wanted to know is, what happens to them when they die?

Researcher: Why are you asking this question?

Mrs. E: Well, because I don't know.

Researcher: What do you think will happen to your Buddhist family members and friends?

Mrs. E: Well, I have heard before at the church that they will not go to heaven.

Researcher: Do you think its true?

Mrs. E: I don't know. Do you know?

Researcher: Well, I think only God knows.

Mrs. E: Mmmmm.

She seemed very puzzled and looked frustrated. And on this note, our interview ended.

Mrs. E seemed very uncomfortable in answering many of my questions, especially questions concerning her spirituality. It was probably not because she wanted to conceal something from me, but perhaps because she did not possess clarity in her thoughts and beliefs.

Mrs. F

Mrs. F is an 85 year-old widow who lives alone in a home. She considers herself a lifelong Christian. Currently, she is not a member of any church and only attends the Wednesday Senior Fellowship at the church. When she was asked to participate in the study, she looked very surprised. She said, "Wow, I feel very honored to be asked. Are you sure I will be a good participant?" After assuring her that she will be a great participant, we set up the time and place to meet.

The interview took place at her home in the morning. She offered to have a breakfast with me. When she was giving me the driving directions to her house, she repeatedly mentioned that her house was located in a "dumpy" neighborhood, and her house was "old and small." The first thing she said at the door was to thank me for coming to such a "dumpy home." The interview took place in the kitchen.

Mrs. F: I hope you like Continental breakfast.

She offered me toast, coffee, strips of bacon, and eggs.

After some conversation about the weather and current events, I asked the first question.

Researcher: Please describe some of your difficult and challenging experience? She answered.

Mrs. F: I think was racism. It only happened during the war, but many Japanese were discriminated against. Many of my friends were called names. You know like, dirty Jap and things like that.

Researcher: Were you treated badly also.

Mrs. F: No, I was one of the lucky ones. I knew very nice white people. The camp was not bad either. It actually was kind of fun.

Researcher: In what ways?

Mrs. F: Well, me and my friends were all teenagers and we

run around and had fun.

Researcher: Which internment camp did you go"

Mrs. F: I went to Jerome, Arkansas. It was like a foreign country. People there were really ignorant. But I did not stay there very long. I was offered a job in Detroit and I worked there as a secretary. People I met there were very nice. My boss and others really took good care of me. And after the war, I met my husband in Detroit also.

Researcher: Do you remember any difficulties or challenges in your life back then?

Mrs. F: You know, I remember, one incident. This was some time after the war. I used to walk to and from work. And when I was walking from the bus stop, a car full of colored guys came around and offered me a ride. I ignored them but they drove around and came after me again to offer me a ride. I got really scared, so I started to run. And for several blocks, they chased me with their car. It was really scary. And to this day, I am scared of black people. That is about the only story I can give you.

Researcher: Tell me about your spiritual life. How did your experience during the war impact your spiritual life?

Mrs. F: I attended a Baptist church in the town where I lived. It was a Caucasian church. The pastor was very, very nice.

Researcher: How did your experience at the church impact your

spirituality?

Mrs. F: Well the church taught us many things, what we should do and what not to do.

Her answers about her spirituality were very short. She seemed confused about the term spirituality. I went on to the next question.

Researcher: In your present life, what difficulties and challenges are you experiencing?

Mrs. F: Well, my husband's death was difficult. But he died in my arms. He died of a heart attack and to this day, it really puzzles me because, nothing was wrong with his health before. So, when he died, I called my kids. I did not call my daughter though, because she is too emotional. So, I called my son and told him, Daddy left us.

Researcher: What helped you to overcome this difficulty?

Mrs. F: Many friends helped. Of course my kids too.

Researcher: How did you deal with your husband's death spiritually?

Mrs. F: Well, it was the will of God, I think. I don't understand it, but I think I need to accept it and go on.

Researcher: How did it impact your spirituality?

Mrs. F: Well, many of us in our age wonder, you know, we do not want to die alone. I know that we are going

to heaven, and I don't doubt that a moment, because I am a Christian. But I try not to think about it too much.

After this question, Mrs. F, with a quiet voice and with a concerned look on her face, said, "You know. Oh may be I should not say anything."

And she looked at the tape recorder. So I turned off the tape recorder and encouraged Mrs. F to speak freely.

Mrs. F: You know, several months ago, Mrs. (a person's name here) at the church spoke about Buddhism and she said there is no salvation in Buddhism. I thought her comments were not fair. I think what she said was not very nice. What do you think? You are a minister. Am I wrong to think like that?

Researcher: Well, I do have my opinion, but today is about you. May be we can discuss this on later day at the church. What do you think? Do you think you have a right answer?

Mrs. F: I have many friends who are Buddhists. I don't know too much about the Bible, but I just thought it was not nice. That is all I wanted to say.

Mrs. F did not elaborate on her feelings any further.

Researcher: How do you see your spiritual future?

Mrs. F: Like I said, I try not to think about it. I really do not want to take time and really follow through on that. On this note, we finished our interview.

During the interview, Mrs. F has used several racial epithets. She seemed to have very bitter feelings against certain racial groups. She also had a very difficult time answering questions that had to do with her spirituality.

Mrs. G

Mrs. G is a 79 year-old woman who lives alone in a retirement community. She has been a church member for about seven years. When I contacted Mrs. G to participate in this study, she seemed surprised at first, but agreed to meet with me, saying, "Well, I might enjoy that." So, I set up a time to meet at her home.

When I arrived at her home, she was in the kitchen. It was almost a noontime and she offered lunch. She told me,

Mrs. G: Well, when I was growing up, we had very little to eat. My parents told me not to waste any food. I was going through some leftovers in my refrigerator and that is what you are going to get today. I hope you don't mind.

As she prepared lunch, she asked me,

Mrs. G: Do you have anything that you cannot eat, because my husband was a very picky eater?

Researcher: No, I eat anything.

Mrs. G: Your wife is a lucky woman. My husband did not appreciate anything I did. Did you know that I was divorced?

Researcher: No, I did not.

Mrs. G: My Japanese friends said, why divorce after 40 years. But I said to them, why should I have one more miserable year. Of course he is dead now.

All this conversation took place before the lunch. She went on and expressed more feelings she had toward her late husband. I had seen Mrs. G at the church but never had any conversation with her before the interview. Mrs. G volunteered all this information before I asked a single question. And on the lunch table, the interview started.

Researcher: Could you share with me some of your difficult or challenging experience in your past?

Mrs. G: When I was 13 years old girl, I had to do all the household chores. That was very difficult. Both my parents worked on the farm, so my older sisters had to take care of the household chores. And when they left, one got married and one left home, I had to take over. There was not any discussion of why I had to do it or anything. I had to and I did it. There was no negative feelings, like I was too scared or anything like that.

And of course, my marriage was very difficult. But I have very good relationship with my kids.

Researcher: In your difficult experiences, what helped you the most?

Mrs. G: "Well, I started to go to our church when I divorced my husband. Fellowship at the church helped me a lot. My parents were very active Christians. My father was a strict man. He was a disciplinarian and a patriarch of the family. He was the law, and he was big for a Japanese man. He was like 6 feet. That is big for a Japanese especially in those days. And when my father worked as a store clerk, my father made us go to the lady store owner's church every Sunday and learn the Bible and things like that. When I got married, we moved and started to going to a church in that town. I stopped going to that church when I had kids, because there were some people at the church who were not very nice. I guess I was disenchanted by that church. I started to go to church again when I got divorced.

Researcher: In your present life, describe things that are challenging or difficult.

Mrs. G: Well, I am alone, but I do what I want to do now and I am happy.

Researcher: What helps you the most now.

Mrs. G: Faith in God. Trust in the Lord. You know.

Researcher: Could you elaborate on that?

Mrs. G: Well, knowing that someone up there loves you.

Researcher: Anything more?

Mrs. G: Well that some one is there."

I then began my last question.

Researcher: How do you see your spiritual future?

Mrs. G: I continue to go to church and do things that I enjoy.

Researcher: Do you worry about your future?

Mrs. G: No, my kids live close to me and as long as I am healthy like I am now, I will be fine. No, let me rephrase that, as long as I trust in the Lord, I will be fine.

Researcher: Are there anything else you want to say?

Mrs. G: Oh, yes. I wanted to show you this notebook with my family tree and the pictures. I am constantly adding things to it. You know, the family is very, very important.

Mrs. G then proceeded with a passionate explanation of her notebook with her family tree and many family pictures minus her former husband.

From the time the conversation started, her divorce and her husband often became the center of conversation. It was evident that the topic was occupying a large place in her heart. I was

very puzzled about why she was bringing up the stories about her husband whom she seemed to despise. But at least she was open with that part of her past with me and did not try to hide it.

Mrs. G also talked about her family many times and stressed the importance of family to her. Although she has been coming to the church for seven years, her interest and knowledge about the religion seemed very minimal.

Mrs. H

Mrs. H is a 78 year-old widow, who just recently started to attend the senior fellowship at the church. She is very active in doing volunteer work, not at the church but in her local community. She is the only participant who contacted me when she heard about the interview, and offered to volunteer in the study. She seemed very eager to invite me to her home and talk.

When I entered her home, Mrs. H gave a tour of her home. I learned that she is an award-winning bonsai expert and, her garden was filled with many bonsai trees. Her room was also filled with Japanese paintings and crafts that she created. There were many pictures of her family that covered the walls throughout her home.

I sat down with her in the Kitchen and started the interview.

She offered me a cup of coffee and some Hawaiian nuts, saying, "Please try. It is very good.

The interview started with a question about difficulties and challenges in her past.

Mrs. H: The farm life was a challenge. My father was a farmer. When I graduated from high school, I wanted to become a nurse, because I was in the hospital for a while and a nurse is what I wanted to become. So I went to school to become one. And I was sent to Chicago to do my internship. But during that time the war broke out. Because I was outside of western States, I did not have to go to the camp. But my boss, at the hospital, did not want me there because he thought that his patients would not like me because I am a Japanese. So I was sent to another place and there, I roomed with other Japanese girls who came from the internment camps. This was actually my first experience with the Japanese people outside of my family because I grew up in a farm out in really rural area, and there were no Japanese other than my parents and my siblings. This was when I was 20 years old. And the girls talked about the camp life all the time. They were talking about all the dances they attended and dates and many fun things. They really had a great time in there. You know I was experiencing all kinds of discriminations being at the outside world, being called names and it really was difficult.

And all that time, those girls were having great time in there. I felt left out a bit. My other difficult experience goes back to my childhood. When I was still

growing up in the farm, the land-lady would always drag her kids to the church, and I was taken with them to the church. And in this church, there was a boy who always picked on me. Throwing things at me and pinching me, and it would never stop. I guess he disliked me because I was the only Japanese and I looked strange to him. So, I just ignored him. It was kind a difficult. But that was a beginning of my Christianity too. I learned a lot. Oh, I learned the song Jesus loves me. It sticks with me even now.

Researcher: What helped you the most to overcome these difficulties?

Mrs. H: Well, I think, knowing myself, I just put myself into situations where I can feel at home. Like join various clubs, and I help out as much as I can. I volunteer every Tuesday at the medical center. So being with other nice people and helping others really helps me. And not dwell too much on the negative. You know, in many situations, you can not do anything about it.

Researcher: In looking back, how do you see your spirituality being impacted?

Mrs. H: "Ever since I started Sunday school, I have always believed in God. Although I was married in a Buddhist church because my husband's family were Buddhists. But I think I am a Christian, and I just can't get God out of my mind. I don't know why. I was always like that I guess. And I know, when I die, I will be taken up to the north to San Jose and buried up there

because my husband is up there.

Researcher: In your present life, what are some of your difficult and challenging experiences?

Mrs. H: My husband passed away two years ago. And since I have some of my family members down here in Southern California, I moved down here, away from my other family members and my friends. It was very difficult for me to move down here and I am still trying to get used to here.

Researcher: What has helped you to overcome this difficulty.

Mrs. H: "My family down here helped me a great deal. My daughter is great and my son-in-law is great too. He is in real estate and he even found this house for me. But the first house he found, it did not look right. It was isolated, and I guess I have a superstition like that. Anyway, he found me another house and here I am. He was very understanding. They help me a lot. I help them a lot too. I am a type of person who thinks the family is very important. In fact, I will show you my family tree. Several years ago, I spend a lot time to putting together a family tree and it is very interesting.

Researcher: Was your husband's death difficult experience for you?

Mrs. H: Well, no not really. My husband was sick for about 16 years with cancer and other illnesses. And I took very good care of him. My time with my husband

increased quite a bit over the years because of his illness. And about five years ago, I said to myself, I really need to take care of myself, which is really important. So I found an adult day care place, and I was able to have some time to my self. Then I started to pursue my hobbies, like bonsai and crafts. I also became active with people, like in the church.

Researcher: How would you describe your spiritual journey to now?

Mrs. H: Well, when I get into a desperate situation, like the other night, I took my bonsai tree to a fair ground and I had to leave it there over night. At that night I became very worried about my bonsai tree, so I prayed to God to keep my bonsai safe from harm. I pray like that some times. The minister at my former church was very nice too. I still visit her every time I go back.

Researcher: How do you see your spiritual future?

Mrs. H: Well that, I don't know. Because of my religious background, when I die, I won't feel sorry for my self. That I know I will be going to the better place. And until then, I will keep busy. Going to the church and mix it up with my projects, and my family occasions. Oh, and sports. I am a football and baseball addict. So I will attend as much games I can and just have fun.

The interview ended with spirited discussions about why there are no professional football teams in Southern California.

She seemed very comfortable throughout the interview and also seemed confident about choices she made in her life and things she believes in. She talked a lot about her family, not just the immediate family but also the extended family. She showed me many pictures from her childhood days as well as of her parents. She also shared with me her family tree she was creating to show her family.

Mrs. I

Mrs. I is a 70 year-old woman who is married to a 74 year-old Japanese American man. Mrs. I is a very active member of the church. Both Mrs. I and Mr. I are participants of this study. When I approached her for the possible participation in this study, Mrs. I not only accepted it at once, but also volunteered her husband, saying that he would make a good interviewee. The interview took place in her home.

After I was invited into their home, the interview started immediately and I posed the first question.

Mrs. I: I remember, being called names in school where I was attending. You know, words like "dirty Jap" and "Yellow Jap." When the time of saluting the American flag came, I remember saying to myself, why should I

salute the American flag when I am called names. So I refused to say the pledge allegiance, which we did every morning at my school. My parents were called to school and the teacher suggested my parents that they would only use English in their home in order to change my behavior. So my parents spoke only English at our home from that day on. I guess it was very difficult for my parents to raise a child like me. I was very strong willed child. Any way, those days were very difficult.

Researcher: What helped you to overcome those difficulties?

Mrs. I: I guess my parents were a big help. They were very strict and they did everything motivated by honor. My mother said to me and my sister many times, 'Do not bring shame to this family.' So she wanted the best for us so that people would think we were outstanding citizens. And one of the things she did was to send us to a church. My parents were not Christian, but they thought attending a church would help us. So I learned a lot about the Bible and Jesus at the church.

Researcher: What experience impacted you spiritually the most in the past?

Mrs. I: Attending the Mount Hermon Conference when I was in high school was probably the most important experience in my spiritual life when I was younger. I knew about the Bible and I knew some of the hymns. But as a Christian I did not know Jesus personally. At the conference, I learned that I could have a personal relationship with Jesus in my life through prayers, reading the Bible, in singing, and in just about anything that you do. So I started to read the Bible

as if it was personally addressed to me. I prayed to Jesus as if I was speaking to him. I told everything and that changed me so much. Jesus was not some being far away from me. Jesus was with me.

Researcher: Please describe some of your current or recent difficult and/or challenging experiences.

Mrs. I: The passing of our son was very difficult and challenging experience for both of us. I prayed and prayed and I cried and cried. I had many questions. Why him? Why now? All kinds of different questions came up. And I never received a definite answer. It was a very trying time, but I really felt Jesus very close to me and felt that he was saying to me, 'it is OK'.

Researcher: What experience in your life impacted you the most in your spiritual journey?

Mrs. I: When I was attending a prayer meeting one day, the Spirit came to me. I don't know how to explain this, but I really felt the Spirit with me and in me. You probably think I am weird or something. But I am telling you the truth. The Spirit was with me, in me, and all around me. And that day on, my personal relationship with Jesus was much stronger. I really felt convicted for many of my sins. I learned to relax. I learned to take care of my self. I learned to be responsible for my talents. I learned so many things. My husband also thinks I was like a new person from that day.

Researcher: How do you see your spiritual future?

Mrs. I: I see my self enjoying my life, my retirement years. And I want to do things for God, like using my talent for a church work. I love craft and I want to use that for seniors so that they can enjoy their time like me. I also want to teach kids crafting too.

She was the most enthusiastic person in this study. She laughed many times and cried when she was describing her son and her experience with the Spirit. She emphasized her personal relationship with Jesus and the Spirit, whenever she was asked about her spirituality. She seemed genuinely exited about her life and appeared to be enjoying it very much.

Mrs. J

Mrs. J is the youngest of all interview participants at the age of 65. She has been a member of the church since the late 1960s. The interview took place at her home, which she shares with her daughter's family. She seemed not concerned or anxious about the interview when I asked to see if she might be willing to participate in an interview. I was able to make an appointment over the phone, on this first conversation with her. In her home, on the day of the interview, I was offered a choice of coffee or tea, and was also offered some cookies and apples.

The conversation started with her self-introduction. After stating her name, she immediately mentioned that she lost her husband five years ago. She proceeded to introduce her two daughters, a son, and their spouses, as well as her grandchildren. She also mentioned that her daughter and her son-in-law are looking for a house and they will be moving out very soon with their granddaughter, who is three years-old. She shared that she is a semi-retired dental hygienist, working only several days a week and is contemplating full retirement soon. She also stated that she loves her work and her hobby is gardening and baby-sitting her granddaughter with whom she lives.

Researcher: Please describe some of your difficult and/or challenging experiences in the past.

Mrs. J: I had wonderful childhood and was not difficult at all. I was born in San Francisco and was interned at the Amachi camp in Colorado for a year, when I was very small. And because my father was recruited to work for the U.S. government, our internment days were very short. So I grew up in a predominantly white community.

Perhaps realizing that she was asked to state her difficult experiences, she paused for a moment and said,

Mrs. J: Well, my third year in college was kind a tough.

See, I was studying to be an occupational therapist at college because I wanted go into a helping profession. Then I applied to be an intern at a hospital near my home. And I came out there very depressed. So here I was, thinking I cannot be an occupational therapist any more, but what should I do now? I felt like I was lost and was depressed for some time. It was a difficult time for me.

Researcher: What helped you to overcome or deal with those difficulties and challenges?

Mrs. J: I believe that God was leading my way, and I met my husband shortly after that. I know now that everything fell into a place where God wanted me to be. So now that I look back, God helped me through the difficulties. So coming out, I had much stronger faith in God, I think.

Researcher: Please describe other experiences in your past that significantly impacted you spiritually.

Mrs. J: My mother sent my sister and I to a local Methodist church when we were in Colorado when we were small, and we memorized Bible verses and sang old hymns. And when I Was 13 years old, I went to Mr. Hermon Conference and that was when I became a Christian. When I became a college student, I became very active in the church life. Now that I remember, dates with my husband were kind of tough, because he was not a Christian. But he came from a strong Buddhist family. I was worried that having different values would be bad for us. But he was so nice, so we got married. Before we got married

we talked about raising children. And he said, you can raise them Christian. But her mother told him that he, my husband, had to stay a Buddhist, because he was the only son in the family. Although he was very understanding, it was very difficult not being able to go to church together. So I really had to think about what it means for me to be a Christian and values that I believe in. So I started to study the Bible and had many questions about my spirituality, compared to my husband or to his family.

Researcher: What are some of your difficulties and/or challenges in your current or recent experience?

Mrs. J: Well, my husband passed away five years ago, and that was very difficult experience for me. That was probably my most difficult experience in my life. I lost my husband's love and companionship, support, and having someone who support you no matter what. And physical things too, you know, him not being there was very difficult.

She went on and described her husband's fight with illness and his last days, with tears in her eyes.

Researcher: What helped you to overcome this challenge?

Mrs. J: Well, again, God helped. When my husband was suffering from the illness, I kind of wanted him to become a Christian, but he couldn't because he was the only son in his family and that would make his mother, who had already passed away, sad. Then, his Buddhist priest came to our home, suddenly without an appointment, and

told him and us that it is OK for him to become a Christian, it is OK for his mother, and there are no problems. I truly believe that the minister was sent by God to help us. And after that, he had real peace and decided to become a Christian.

Mrs. J: After his passing, I was very strong. Many people were surprised. But you know, God will give you the strength, when you need it. I had to be the leader of the family, because my daughters and my son were also suffering. It was also wonderful to see so many people coming to the funeral, and supporting us.

Researcher: How did this experience impact your spirituality?

Mrs. J: My husband's passing really made me to turn to God and to the Bible, God is my strength! This word from the Bible came to me repeatedly. And made me realized that my faith is an everyday thing. It is a personal relationship.

Researcher: Please describe what you mean by personal relationship.

Mrs. J: I see God as my friend. If you have a friend, you share everything, your desires, your secrets, your happiness, and you can say anything, things like, God why God? Banging at the chest, you know! And the Bible speaks to you in a personal way, like oh my gosh, that is just for me. And sometimes you think of some verses different than what somebody else thinks. It is by your

own interpretation, so it is personal. At different times, the Bible speaks to you in different ways too. I like this word from the Bible, Hide the word in your heart, and God will speak to you.

Researcher: What changes do you see in your spirituality over the years?

Mrs. J: I grew up very obedient to by parents. I never talked back to my parents, unlike my relationship with my children. We have an open relationship. I think it is healthier than "gaman" all the time. That part of being Japanese is difficult. "Gaman" can be good sometimes, but holding back your feelings and having no outlet is not good. I mean, I don't believe in an open relationship that can hurt some one, because there are doing things in gentle ways. I can now talk to my mother more openly now. Of course I need to be sensitive to her feelings, since she is more Japanese than I am.

Mrs. J: When I was growing up, I thought of myself as a Japanese American. But now I am a Christian Japanese American. The Christian part comes first. But, don't take this wrong. I am very proud to be a Japanese. There are a lot of great thinks in my culture, like being gentle, nurturing and kind. There are so much good in being Japanese. But, I think it is also very important to express your self. And some Japanese people have hard time doing that.

Mrs. J: I also have many friends who are not Japanese. When I was in college, as a Christian, I realized that

God made everybody. Not just Japanese and Caucasian but everybody. I grew up kind a prejudiced, being taught that Japanese are superior to others and my mother said some negative things about others. But I got over that. Being a Christian first and Japanese second means that I need to love all the people. I also hate prejudice. It really angers me to think about how Japanese Americans were treated during the war. I have heard so many sad stories.

Researcher: Please describe your outlook for your spiritual future.

Mrs. J: I don't know what plans God has for me. But I think God made us to give love to others and also to receive love from others. You know, I love God and God loves me. I love my grandchildren and they love me. I love my kids and they love me too. You know, I miss my husband but I also miss the companionship to give and receive love between a man and women. Who knows, I may find another love in my life.

On this note, the interview finished. Throughout the interview, Mrs. J seemed very comfortable. She cried when she was talking about her husband, and when she was talking about the relationship with God. She smiled when she talked about her children, grandchildren and also about God sometimes. I was really struck by Mrs. J's emotional openness.

CHAPTER 10

Analysis

Introduction to Analysis

This project was originally designed to study a group of elderly Japanese American Christian people regardless of their gender. However, during the course of research, I decided to focus only on the women participants for several reasons.

One, the pool of possible participants were situated in an environment, namely at a local, Japanese American, church senior fellowship, where the ratio of women to men is 7 to 1. It was very difficult to recruit elderly Japanese American Christian men who fit the homogeneous sampling description requirements, which was used to gather participants for this study.

Two, as the study progressed, I recognized, through observations and interviews, that there was more diversity in the behaviors and in the interview answers among the group of women participants than men.

Three, as the study of the group's past continued, especially in terms of discrimination, I uncovered that Japanese American women encountered more types of discriminations than men, which will be detailed in the next chapter.

For these three reasons, the focus of this research was shifted to women only. However, I did conduct interviews with three elderly Japanese American Christian men who fit the homogeneous sampling description requirements of this study, except for their gender.

Similarities in Both Genders

First, the lack of anger or rage in their words or in their actions astonished me. Racial prejudices as well as unjust treatments of the Japanese immigrants, that were detailed earlier in this paper, were experienced, in one way or another, by all participants of this study, women or men. I myself, on more than one occasion, became emotionally outraged hearing some of the stories from the internment. Yet, I observed very little emotional rage or expressions of anger that were directed toward the U.S. government, toward Caucasian Americans, or toward any other powerful entities, during the interviews or during the

senior fellowship programs. Instead, many participants, both women and men, used expressions such as "difficult," "challenging," "concerned," and "sad" to describe their reactions to the racial injustices and discrimination they encountered. Only one woman, among all 13 participants, expressed her anger during the interview.

This observation, however, does not contradict the findings that have been made by many researchers of the Japanese American population. This phenomenon was even pointed out in a government-sponsored study done by the Commission of Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in 1982. It reported that this lack of emotional response was perhaps a result of a group's conscious effort to renounce traumatic feelings and memories by not expressing the traumatic feelings toward others. It was called "social amnesia."¹⁶⁸

Karen Mayeda, in 1994, conducted a phenomenological study concerning the psychological effects of the internment experience and interviewed a group of elderly Japanese Americans. She concluded that most elderly Japanese Americans that she interviewed used what she called "avoidant coping style strategy."¹⁶⁹ And this strategy, which is very similar to "social

amnesia," was applied not only to their memories of the internment experiences, but also to their everyday life experiences. In other words, instead of talking about or discussing certain problems and difficulties in their lives, they become silent or at least become disengaged emotionally from them. This aspect of silence will be discussed further in the next chapter.

The second similarity among all the participants, both women and men, was the politeness in their words and behavior. Japanese culture, for many centuries, emphasized politeness or gentleness as one of the most important moral virtues. Confucianism taught filial respect, and the Japanese culture was greatly influenced by this moral philosophy. Zen Buddhism emphasized the tranquility of the human spirit, and many Japanese, as Buddhists, followed this teaching. Observing that many elderly Japanese Americans, who were not even born in Japan or educated in the Japanese school system still retain this great spirit of politeness, was truly amazing.

Gender Differences

I also observed several differences between female and male participants. First, all three men were very concerned with the

details of events such as the time line and the location. Women, on the other hand, were generally more concerned with the names and the relationships of people. Second, all three men did not hesitate to name the difficulties in their past, however in all three cases, it involved their work, or more specifically their farm labor. Women, on the other hand, named different things as difficulties. Some even refused to name any difficulties.

Analysis Procedures

The analysis portion of this research involves observing and locating patterns and themes in the data, including the data from standardized open-ended questions as well as from other observations. The analysis begins by finding key phrases, terms, and practices that are unique to those who participated in the study. Unique attributes and characteristics to identify one thing from another will be pointed out, using analyst-constructed typologies.

Problem of Openness

The first pattern that became readily apparent was the refusal to participate. As it was detailed in the first part of

the case study, many women, though not all, declined to participate in this study. It is true that many Japanese American women tend to be very shy and are inclined to stay away from public exposure, which perhaps comes from their cultural upbringing. However, many women who were active participants of various church activities, even many who were in leadership positions among women at the church, refused, always very politely, to participate in this study. So this behavior of refusal cannot simply be attributed to their shyness.

This refusal to participate was often connected to their refusal to value their opinions and experiences. Many women, in declining to be interviewed, said, "I have nothing to tell." Many others stated, "I will not be a good interviewee." Others said, "My life is not that interesting." Again, many women who were in leadership positions among women at the church refused to value their opinions and experiences.

This pattern of refusal continued into the interviews. Among those who, after many phone calls and encouragements, participated in the interview, many refused to name the difficulties and challenges in their lives. Two women refused outright, saying, "I have (and had) no difficulties." Many others

changed the subject and explained their family member's difficulties and challenges other than their own.

Many also refused to be critical or refused to pass judgments on the authority, namely the U.S. government, which afflicted so much pain in their lives, as documented in the earlier chapters. Most women did not use terms such as injustice or unfairness to describe the predicament they were forced into during the war. Only one woman criticized the U. S. government. This same person was also critical of certain aspects of the Japanese culture, but she was an exception.

Many women refused to show emotional expressions, other than smiles and laughter. Only two women cried during the interview. Granted that the interviews were not psychological counseling sessions and were not designed to dig deep into the psyche of the participants, however, many people's answers often included long-suffering illnesses and the death of spouses, which are usually considered highly emotional topics. Some women showed the opposite emotional reactions. Some were smiling as they continued to explain the long battle with cancer and the circumstances surrounding the passing of their husbands. I am not a trained psychologist, however, seeing a smile on the face

of an interviewee as she explained the death of her husband was a peculiar sight.

Layer upon layer of refusals really characterize many of the participants behavior and their interview answers. I saw this as a silence on the part of many elderly Japanese American women.

Expressions of Hospitality

Another observation, which really stood out to me, was the expression of hospitality. Most interviews, 9 out of 10, took place at the participants' homes. Most women were very hospitable, and this coincided with the traditional Japanese customs. However, the expressions of hospitality varied and I saw an emerging pattern, which corresponded with the openness of the participants.

Those participants who repeatedly declined to participate in the study were most concerned with the appropriateness of what they offered (food or drink) to me at their homes. Several of them asked if the way in which they prepared tea was good enough for me. One said, "The way I make the tea is probably not the right way." She said this, knowing that I am a Japanese national who grew up in Japan. It seemed that somehow she felt growing

up in the United States as a Japanese was inferior to growing up in Japan. And those women who were very concerned with the appropriateness of what they offered to me were also very concerned about their performance as interviewees. Several of them asked me if she did a good job in the interview and if she was helpful.

Women who did not decline to be interviewed or actively participated were less worried about their expression of hospitality. They seemed confident that what they were offering, whether tea, coffee or a snack, was good or appropriate. They were also less concerned with their performance as interviewees.

Putting these things together as a pattern of behavior, the refusal to participate, on the part of many elderly Japanese American women, may have to do with their self-confidence or self-esteem.

Use of Religious Expressions

To one of many questions on the pilot study, which was designed to determine the eligibility of participants to this research according to the guideline of homogeneous sampling, all 10 women indicated that they consider themselves to be Christians

for most of their lives. However, their use of religious languages varied a great deal. Some utilized a variety of religious languages such as "trust in the Lord," "my faith," "love of Jesus," "the Bible teaches," and "will of God" in answering almost every interview questions. Others used very little religious language. It seemed to me that the use of religious language coincided with the extent of participation at the church where this study was based. In another words, out of the 10 participants, those who frequently used many religious terms in their interview were active members of the church. Those who used religious terms less were non-members, inactive members, or newcomers to the church. Two women who came to this church after many years of active involvement at another church, interestingly, did not use many religious phrases. So the use of religious language seemed to be associated with this particular church.

Out of those who frequently used religious languages, two women often mentioned the phrase "personal relationship with God." Four women often mentioned the words "will of God" and "providence."

Those who did not use many religious phrases stressed instead the words like, "family relationships" and "family reunions."

Two women who hardly used any religious language showed me the family tree, which they have been working on, as if it was a treasure.

Typology

I then attempted to construct a typology according to patterns, categories and themes he observed.

First, I used a category of openness. The openness of participants was judged by four propensities: 1) openness to participating in the interview, 2) openness to recognizing the importance of their opinions and experiences, 3) openness to naming the difficulties in their life experiences, 4) openness to being critical of authority, and 5) openness to being emotionally vulnerable.

These propensities were applied to individuals and they were placed on a scale, which looked like this. (Letters identify the interviewees.)

D A B C E F G H I J

silent ----- open

(Chart A)

Second, I used a category of religiosity. The religiosity of participants was judged by three propensities: 1) frequency of involvement in organized religious activities at the church, 2) frequency of involvement in personal religious activities, such as prayer and reading scripture on their own time, and 3) frequency of religious expressions used during the interview. Not to be confused with the person's 'spirituality,' this religiosity scale is a way to measure participants' religious involvement in their lives by assessing the frequency, not the depth, from the viewpoint of researcher.

Three propensities were applied to individuals and they were then placed on a scale, which looked like this. (Letters identify the interviewees.)

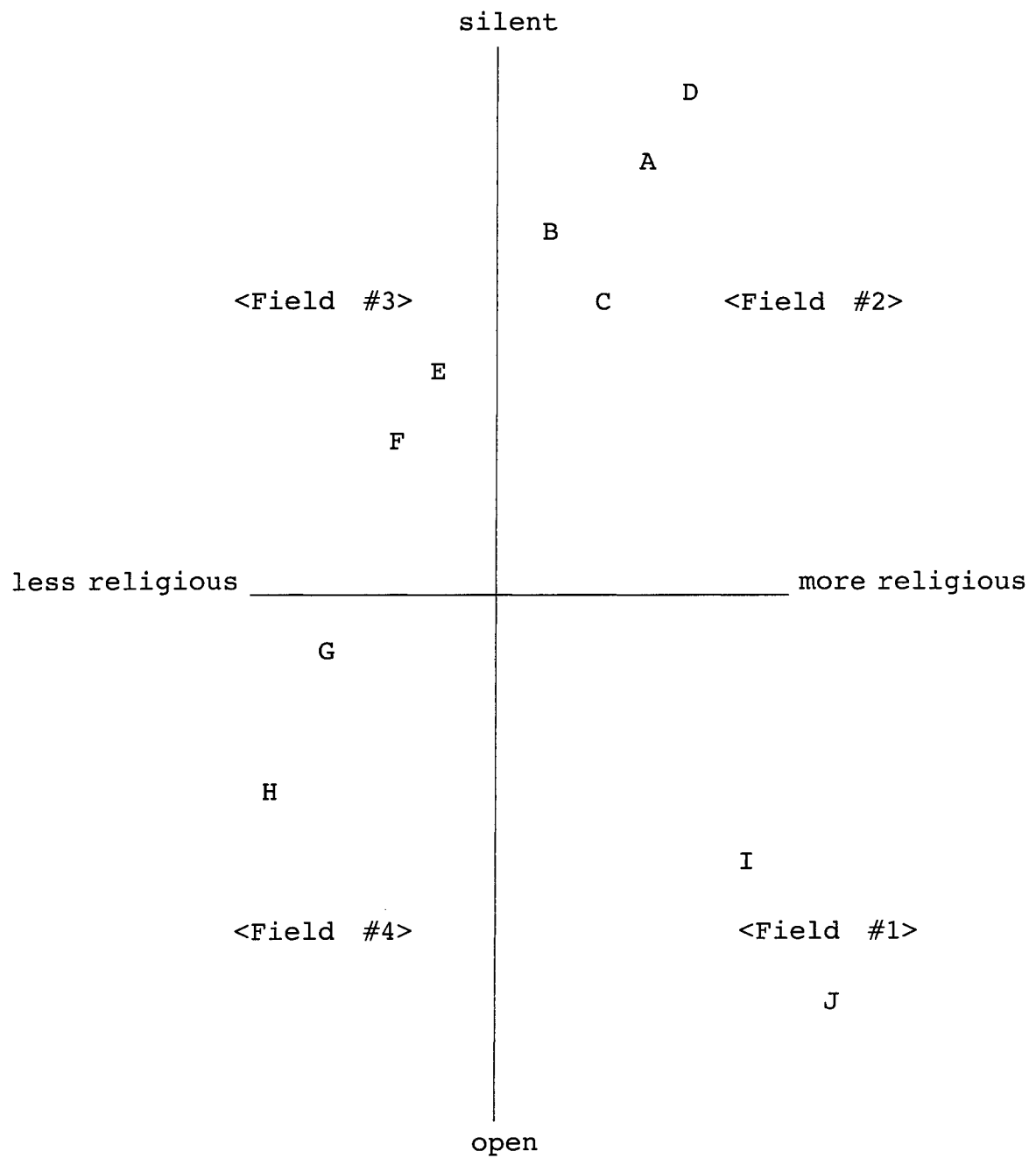
H G F E B C A D I J

less religious ----- more religious

(Chart B)

I, in an attempt to further analyze the data, put two scales together into one graph. The graph looked like this. The vertical line is the openness scale. The horizontal line is the religiosity

scale.



(Chart C)

Placing two graphs together created four fields in which participants were placed. I located two women in field #1, four women in field #2, two women in field #3, two women in field #4.

It was very interesting to see that the four most silent women were placed high on the religiosity scale. It was equally interesting to see that the two women who were most religious and the two women who were least religious were placed at the lower half of the graph to indicate their openness.

And more observations from the graph should be pointed out. One, the openness gap between religious women was much wider than the openness gap between less religious women. (See chart C) All four less religious women were placed on the openness scale between open religious women and silent religious women. Two, the religiosity gap between the four open women were wider than the religiosity gap between the silent women. (See chart C) All six silent women were placed on the religiosity scale between most religious women and least religious women.

In observing the graph and the placement of 10 women, themes emerged to characterize each field.

The theme of field #1 was "personal relationship with God."

Two women in this field repeatedly emphasized this notion.

The theme of field #2 was "will of God" or "providence." Four women in this field all mentioned these concepts. They also seem to have an authoritarian view of God.

The theme of field #3 was "questioning" and "confusion." They were the only two participants who asked me questions. They also seemed to possess confused personal beliefs.

The theme of field #4 was "family relationship" or "family tree." Both of them were very excited to show me pictures of their family and family tree.

In analyzing this graph, several important inferences can perhaps be made. One, the woman's openness was not directly related to her religiosity (religiosity which was defined by me), since two very religious women were very open as well as two least religious women. Two, a person's propensity toward relationships, whether it is with God or with people, seems to point to women's openness. Three, the authoritarian view of God seems to point to women who are silent. Four, silent women who are neither religious nor relationship-oriented, seem to possess somewhat confused belief systems.

With these four inferences, derived from an analysis of the qualitative data, I am now ready to make interpretations and several theories grounded in the research upon the spirituality of elderly Japanese American Christian women.

CHAPTER 11

Interpretation

In order to illuminate the issues that I am attempting to bring to the surface, let me begin this chapter by asking several questions.

First, what led many elderly Japanese American Christian women to deny their self-significance and lose their self-confidence? Did they choose to withdraw themselves in order to cope with life's difficulties or did some external force silence them? And what are the results of women being silent?

Second, what caused some elderly Japanese American Christian women to become open or self-expressive? How do 'relationships' affect one's openness?

The first set of questions deal with issues related to elderly Japanese American Christian women's silence. The second set of questions deal with issues related to elderly Japanese American Christian women's openness.

Interpretative Framework

Before diving into the interpretation phase of this research, I will now discuss how certain interpretative tools will shape this study. I chose three different groups of theorists in interpreting both the silence and the openness of the researched women. I will briefly examine each of the theorists and their theoretical frameworks.

Carol Gilligan, Professor of Human Development and Psychology at Harvard Graduate School of Education, claimed that the moral development of women differs from that of men. She criticized her colleague Lawrence Kohlberg, who earlier established his version of moral development theory in which women constantly scored low in the moral development stages he created. Gilligan questioned Kohlberg for using only males in his studies and establishing individual rights and justice as the central issues of morality for all humans. In her very influential book titled In a Different Voice, after interviewing over fifty young women, she demonstrated that females are more responsive to real-life moral situations, social relations, and the feelings of others in moral decision-making.¹⁷⁰

The collaborating authors of Women's Ways of Knowing published an influential study in 1986. Like Gilligan, they were motivated by the absence of women in developmental psychology, both in the theory-making position and as research subjects.¹⁷¹ In this study, over one hundred women were interviewed by the researchers in order to understand women's cognitive styles. From this empirical data, the book described five different characteristics in women's knowing. The focus of this work is principally in the area of developing for women a means of gaining a greater sense of self.

Traise Yamamoto teaches at the University of California, Riverside. She is a professor of English who specializes in Asian American literary and cultural studies, poetry, race and gender theory, and in autobiography studies. In 1999, she wrote a book titled Masking Selves, Making Subjects: Japanese American Women, Identity, and Their Body.¹⁷² Through an examination of post-World War II autobiographical writings, fiction, and poetry, Yamamoto argues that many Japanese women writers have employed a kind of defense mechanism by masking themselves textually as

well as psychologically as subjects. She also looks at how the West has sexualized, infantilized, and feminized Japanese culture for over a century in a very damaging manner.

Carol Lakey Hess is a practical theologian who teaches at the Claremont School of Theology as a professor of Religious Education and at Claremont Graduate University as a professor of Religion. In 1997, she published a book titled, Caretakers of Our Common House: Women's Development in Communities of Faith. Writing from an explicitly feminist perspective and employing Gilligan and Kegan's theories, she provides an account of the ways American society can conspire to weaken the full development of women and their spirituality. She also encourages communities of faith to create environments in which women can find their own voices as expressions of their authentic selves through "hard dialogues and deep connections."¹⁷³

Besides the developmental psychological perspective of Gilligan and the collaborative authors of Women's Ways of Knowing, Yamamoto's literary review in the field of Asian women study, and Hess's feminist theology, I will also employ perspectives

of feminist theologians such as Valerie Saiving, Judith Plaskow, Susan Nelson Denfee. From the field of religious education and methodology, Mary Elizabeth Moore as well as Maria Harris will also be utilized to provide interpretative support to this study.

Oppression Causes Women to Become Silent

I found that the several women described as "silent" in the book Women's Ways of Knowing were strikingly similar to the silent women in this study in several aspects. Silent women in the book had a very difficult time describing themselves. They devalued themselves and did not trust their own abilities to think and understand. They were also almost blindly dependent on authorities.¹⁷⁴ There was, however, much dissimilarity. Silent women who were described in the book were very young, uneducated, and poor. They also experienced much domestic violence with very little social support from their family or community.¹⁷⁵ Silent Japanese women in this study are elderly, well-educated, economically secure, and have very loving family members and a community that they belong to. So if it was not the age, education, economic status, or domestic violence that pushed those Japanese women to their silence, what did? Authors of the book concluded

that some women become silent as a result of oppressive influences in their lives. Four examples of oppressive influences were named: poverty, isolation, violence and extreme sex-role stereotypes.¹⁷⁶ Out of those four oppressive influences, although in different forms compared to those the young women experienced, I believe that silent Japanese women have experienced three: namely, isolation, violence and extreme sex-role stereotypes. But before naming those influences, I will examine another empirical researcher's perspective in the issue of silence.

Traise Yamamoto, in her groundbreaking work on Japanese women's subjectivity titled, Masking Selves, Making Subjects, which reviewed autobiographies of many Japanese American women, observed that "Nisei women's autobiographies are frustratingly unbiographical, not given to personal disclosure or passages of intimate self-reflection."¹⁷⁷ Yamamoto repeatedly points out the instances of the lack of emotion or the hiding of self in many Japanese elderly women's autobiographies. As a result, she reveals that in the American literary circles, Japanese women's autobiographies are not taken as self-revealing narratives that

the autobiographies often are, but are mostly recognized as sociological and/or historical documents and taken at face value.¹⁷⁸ I see similarities in Yamamoto's description of elderly Japanese women's autobiographies and the silent participants of this study. Although those women who wrote their autobiographies thought of their experience and documenting them as very important, they did not see themselves as important subjects. Many silent, elderly, Japanese women in this study also seemed often emotionally detached from their selves as well as devalued their personal experiences. Yamamoto, although much younger, being a Japanese woman herself, draws attention to negative imageries that were forced on the Japanese women as oppressive influences that made them the way they are. One comes from traditional Japanese imagery of quiet, selfless, and hardworking wife/mother. The other comes from American sexual stereotypes.¹⁷⁹ So both authors of Women's Ways of Knowing and Yamamoto, coming from a developmental perspective and from a literary criticism standpoint respectively, indicate, from their empirical data, the strong connection between oppressive influences in women's lives and women becoming silent.

Mary Elizabeth Moore, a feminist theologian, in her writing titled Women and Men in the Social Order, also named the two most devastating oppressions of women. One was poverty and the other was also violence.¹⁸⁰ She stated that many North American women (as well as those from other parts of the world) are constantly exposed to these types of oppressions. I believe that sexist attitudes as well as ageism are also forms of psychologically violent oppressive influences that plague many elderly American women.

I theorize that many elderly Japanese American Christian women did not choose to be silent, but were silenced by oppressive influences, which they encountered during their life journeys. I now name four oppressive influences that plagued those women that are unique to the experiences of elderly Japanese American Christian women that are quite possibly responsible for making them more silent among silent women of the United States.

Racism as an Oppressive Influence on Japanese American Women

The first obvious oppressive influence on many Japanese American women was the racism that they endured before, during,

and after WWII. This oppressive influence has already been detailed in chapter six of this study. This oppression influenced both Japanese American women and men, making many become silent. The first part of the last chapter touched on this in detail.

Traditional Japanese Culture as an Oppressive Influence on Japanese American Women

The second oppressive influence that is unique to Japanese Americans women came from Japan's traditional culture of male dominance. Many Japanese immigrants from the 1800s and early 1900s were exposed to this ideology. Traise Yamamoto, named "strictures and demand of domesticity" upon Japanese immigrant women, which is rooted in Japanese religious traditions that placed women in that society of lower class citizens, as oppressive silencing factors.¹⁸¹ This oppressive influence has already been detailed in chapter seven.

Stereotypical images of Japanese women in the United States as an Oppressive Influence on Japanese American Women

The third oppressive influence came from racist stereotypical images of Japanese women, which were promulgated

by many Americans throughout the 20th century. The book *Women's Ways of Knowing* also names "extreme sex-role stereotypes" as a form of oppression that influences the silent women.¹⁸² It is useful to examine this unique oppressive influence at some length.

There are several distinct stereotypical images of Japanese women that have become accepted by many Americans over the years, which also greatly affected the lives of Japanese women in the United States.

The first and most popular imagery of Japanese women, according to Yoshi Kuzuma, is the sensual geisha girl who is devoted to men.¹⁸³ Since Japan had no diplomatic relationship with the outside world for over 200 years, when it was introduced to the West merely 100 years ago, it was done in a way to arouse people's curiosity. Japan was often described as a land of enchantment with strange dresses and customs. Japanese religions, such as Zen, which most Westerners find "frustratingly confusing, yet which state of enlightenment they are quickly to claim, only added to the notion of exotic."¹⁸⁴ When Japanese women were introduced to the world, many writers emphasized the quiet and submissive character of Japanese women, which partly came from

years of oppressive, Confucian teachings. This description, coupled with the imagery of geisha girls, quickly sexualized Japanese women. This sexualization of Japanese women spread to the other women from Asia. Soon, most of them were thrown into an "undifferentiated pool of Asian women whose (assumed or enforced) foreignness and physical exoticism promise a range of delights."¹⁸⁵ They were often seen as submissive, yet sexually active. In popular American novels, plays, and films, Asian women have been, for decades and decades, perpetrated as: Geisha Girl, Lotus Blossom, China Doll, Madame Butterfly, and Dragon Lady.

The second imagery of Japanese women is the helpless, heathen women oppressed by Japanese men and culture who needs to be saved by enlightened American men. On top of very sexualized imagery of Japanese women, they have begun to be seen as women who need to be rescued from unenlightened, Japanese culture and oppressive men. A beautiful Japanese heroine, who suffered greatly under oppressive society, was rescued by a gallant Western lover who treats women with gentleness. This type of imagery has also been repeatedly portrayed in American media to this day.

What motivates American society, or to be more precise American men, to hang on to this type of imagery of Japanese and

Asian women to this day? Some attribute this to a misguided yet widespread belief that Asian women have "somehow been untouched by decades of social and political feminism."¹⁸⁶ Asian women are seen as "cute (as in doll-like), quiet rather than militant, and unassuming rather than assertive (except sexually), as well as more feminine, loyal, and loving."¹⁸⁷ This image of Asian women does in fact show more about the uncertain masculinity and low self-esteem of American men than anything else.¹⁸⁸ But at the same time, this imagery and ostensible popularity of Asian women by American men has caused some American women to hold negative views of Asian women in thinking of them as uncultured, and unrefined group of women who need to be enlightened by American culture and feminism.

In spite of all this visibility as sexual and exotic objects, Asian American women including Japanese American women "remain invisible as subjects, within both dominant disclosure and much feminist disclosure."¹⁸⁹

Implicit and Null curriculums at the Church as Oppressive

Influences on Japanese American Christian Women

The fourth oppressive influence is unique to Japanese

American, Christian women. According to the study titled *Women's Ways of Knowing*, the silenced women relates to authority as being all-powerful and overpowering.¹⁹⁰ This study also points out that silenced women "see blind obedience to authorities as being of utmost importance for keeping out of trouble and insuring their own survival."¹⁹¹ This reminds me about the four women who were placed on the number 2 field of the graph. (See Chart C) Those four very silent women were characterized as having a very authoritarian view of God. During the interviews, those four women acknowledged that they have not, in some of their words, "study the Bible to know much about God" but they "trust in him." Collaborative researchers of *Women's Ways of Knowing* also uncovered that for silenced women, "trying to know 'why' is not thought to be either particularly possible or important."¹⁹²

So what caused those four women to gain an authoritarian view of God? In my opinion, those four women also possess authoritarian views of men and of the government, which they have gained through years of oppressive influences that are already named in this chapter, including racism, traditional Japanese culture, and negative stereotypical imagery. And sequentially, they have gained this very authoritarian view of God. But is that the only

influence? I see the church (the church that these four women belong to) as another cause of an oppressive influence.

Does the church, explicitly teach an authoritarian view of God which discourages women to know God or a sexist view such as God created women second because they are inferior to men? Had some teachings occurred using phrases such as: "Women should never assume leadership position over men," or "Women should always submit to the Bible's authority and never question it?" I, although cannot speak for the entire history of the church, during my three years of observation at this church did not see the evidence of that. However, I recognized, through the course of my observation, implicit ways in which the church teaches and encourages women to be silent.

Maria Harris, in her work titled Completion of Faith Development, named three ways of teaching and learning, the explicit, the implicit and the null.¹⁹³ The implicit curriculum is the organizational structure and the rules of participating. What does the organizational structure of this church teach women? I have pointed out in her observations earlier (Chapters 8 and 9) that the church's leadership, the pastors as well as the elders, was occupied almost only by the men. Even the

of Wednesday Senior Fellowship, in which the ratio of women to men is 7 to 1, is also occupied by men. "The implicit curriculum deals with patterns of authority, criteria for decision making who has the power and who really is the boss."¹⁹⁴ Through these implicit ways of learning, many women at the church were taught to submit to male authority.

The null curriculum or what is not taught also sends powerful messages, according to Maria Harris. What bewildered me during my observations at this church was a lack of discussion concerning the cultural identities issues as well as of the gender issues.¹⁹⁵ What do these implicit and null curriculums at this church teach, if not the silence of women?

There were two women who were placed high on the openness scale and low on the scale of religiosity. I theorize that they (Mrs. H and Mrs. G) held a relatively high degree of openness (although not as high as Mrs. J and Mrs. I) because they possessed something those silent women did not, which was pride related to their cultural filial-heritage based on their relationship with their family members. Both women indicated that they were creating a family tree, and that they were very proud of their cultural heritage. Since "culturally marginalized persons often

suffer from an internalized negation of their culture,"¹⁹⁶ it seems that both Mrs. H and Mrs. G held a more open view of their culture or perhaps possessed "tools for reflecting critically on the dominant culture."¹⁹⁷ And as the typographical graph indicated that their involvement with the church was at a minimum, they were less exposed to this null-curriculum to de-value one's cultural heritage.

However, I feel that since this research was mainly focused on women's religiosity and spirituality, and not on their family relationships, it probably does not have enough data to make any further deductions then are feasible in this study. Perhaps, other researchers can focus their study on this aspect of the lives of Japanese American women at a later time.

I believe that those four women typify many elderly Japanese American Christian women who have been silenced. I mentioned that I encountered layer upon layer of refusals before and during my interviews. I now sees that those layers of refusals or the deafening silence of many elderly Japanese American women were caused by layer upon layer of oppressive influences that they have encountered during their lifelong spiritual journeys.

The Researcher as a Cause of Women's Silence

Lastly, a point that I feel very strongly about making is that I may be to blame for the silence of many elderly Japanese American Christian women during the interviews. I, from the outset of this study, recognized that in any type of qualitative inquiry, and especially for a research utilizing grounded theory, I played an important role in observing people's experiences. In placing myself in the context of this study, I specified three characteristics about myself: one, I am a Japanese citizen, two, I am male, and three, I am a Christian minister. And for many elderly Japanese American Christian women who have been silenced, what did I represent or stand for during these interviews? I was, quite possibly, a personification of all the oppressive influences in their lives.

As a Japanese citizen, I may have, unknowingly, represented the Japanese traditional religious culture and how it treated women. As a male, I may have, unwittingly, symbolized different types of sexism that they have encountered. And as a Christian minister, I may have, unintentionally, embodied the authoritarian teachings in which they have been immersed. In retrospect, I may well have been the most significant limiting

factor of this study, who caused many silent elderly Japanese American Christian women to be even more silent. I wonder if the results of this study may have been very different if a woman conducted the interviews.

However, this study does not end on this dim note, because I had encountered, during this study, several very open, self-confident, self-expressive, and gentle women, who were also subjected to very similar oppressive influences that other women silent encountered. The next section of this chapter will focus on one of those women.

Religious Women and Openness

According to the typological graph that I have constructed in the last chapter, there were two very religious women, who are members of the church (the church where the research had taken place), who were placed very high on the scale of openness. This section of openness focused on one of those two women, who was placed highest on the openness scale; she is Mrs. J. But before elevating Mrs. J to a statue of great importance, I will examine briefly the drawbacks and shortcomings in being a silent woman.

Sin of Silence

Authors of the book *Women's Ways of Knowing* listed many obstacles that silent women face, such as, an under-developed mind, constant feelings of powerlessness, and a continual dependence on others for survival.¹⁹⁸ Valerie Saving, in her pioneering essay titled "The Human Situation: A Feminine View" cataloged more than 10 characteristics of women who do not possess voices of their own. An inability to respect the boundaries of privacy, sentimentality, gossip sociability, and mistrust of reason, were named along with others.¹⁹⁹ I do not assert that all these characteristics listed here apply to all the silent women in the study, since those interviews were not designed as a total unveiling of person's self-profile. Besides, there are other cultural influences that have to be taken into an account for the formation of self in many elderly, Japanese American women. However, some of the characteristics such as a lack of self-assertion and self-negation do seem to apply to them. The four women who were placed at the silent end of the openness scale in this study have expressed, on top of four oppressive influences, their predisposition toward a traditional Japanese notion of "gaman" (a Japanese term for patience or endurance). I observed,

during the course of the interviews as well as in observing a group of seniors at the church, the frequent use of the term "gaman" by many elderly, Japanese persons. Many Japanese see "gaman" as a great virtue. I, however, see "gaman," which has been deeply embedded in the consciousness of many Japanese people, as a concept that can be used as a tool of oppression, especially towards women, just as seemingly harmless theological traditions, such as descriptions of human sins²⁰⁰ and a traditional Christian notion of self-sacrifice, can become sources of oppression to misguide women into becoming silent.

From a theological viewpoint, theologians such as Valerie Saiving, Judith Plaskow, Susan Nelson Dunfee and Carol Lakey Hess, explained silent women's tendencies of self-sacrifice, blind-submission, and the surrender of self-identity as women's sins. Those tendencies are sins in a sense that, they can lead women toward self-abnegation, irresponsibility, and apathy.²⁰¹

However, as Carol Lakey Hess pointed out, it should be also recognized that the sin of self-sacrifice or sin of "gaman" is not fully women's fault and "we must be careful not to blame the victim."²⁰² But at the same time, "we must also be careful not

to reinforce the victim"²⁰³ by calling self-sacrifice a wonderful Christian virtue for women in any situation or calling "gaman" only as a beautiful Japanese tradition of endurance for women. Self-giving or "gaman" does not "further the humanity of women and men in their lives together."²⁰⁴

Of course it is not to say that "gaman" or self-sacrifice is never a virtue. It is. "Gaman" or self-sacrifice can be a great, moral virtue in certain contexts. However, those 'virtues' should never be used as a tool to silence women, intentionally or unintentionally, by men or women.

Toward the Openness of Religious Women

I will now try to examine what constitutes openness in a religious woman, and why it is important. Openness can be understood as the opposite of silence. It stands for all that silence does not stand for. Carol Lakey Hess calls it a "voice" for women. "Voice means," she explains, "having the ability to express oneself and the right to be heard; it means knowing one's mind and will and trusting that one can express oneself in one's community."²⁰⁵ The comparison of four silent women, who appeared in this study, with Mrs. J would perhaps shed a better light on

this notion.

Mrs. J, although deeply religious, was not afraid to speak her mind or to be heard. She was an eager participant and did not hide her emotions. She even bravely named negative influences within a tradition that she loved. She stated:

But, don't take this wrong. I am very proud to be a Japanese. There are a lot of great things in my culture, like being gentle, nurturing and kind. There are so much good in being Japanese. But, I think it is also very important to express your self. And some Japanese people have hard time doing that.

I grew up very obedient to by parents. I never talked back to my parents, unlike my relationship with my children. We have an open relationship. I think it is healthier than "gaman" all the time. That part of being Japanese is difficult. "Gaman" can be good sometimes, but holding back your feelings and have no outlet is not good. I mean, I don't believe in an open relationship that can hurt someone, because there are doing things in gentle ways.

She also named her own needs in a context of her own relationship. According to Carol Gilligan's developmental model for women, a woman achieves the third (and the highest) level of moral development when she realizes that the "relationship implies the presence of both self and other."²⁰⁶ Mrs. J stated in her interview:

But I think God made us to give love to others and also to receive love from others. I love God and God loves me. I love my grandchildren and they love me. I love my kids and they love me too.

So how did she, as a religious woman, attain this level of openness or gained (or perhaps retained) her voice, having been exposed to racism, sexism, and authoritarian Christian curriculums, as other silent women have? I see, in her interview answers, several hints for her openness.

I see God as my friend. If you have a friend, you share everything, your desires, your secrets, your happiness, and you can say anything, things like, God why God! Banging at the chest, you know! And the Bible speaks to you in a personal way, like oh my gosh, that is just for me. And sometimes you think of some verses different than what somebody else thinks. It is by your own interpretation, so it is personal. At different times, the Bible speaks to you in different ways too.

I believe that it was this kind of meaningful relationship with God and with the Bible, which enabled Mrs. J to attain her openness. Carol Lakey Hess called it "hard dialogue and deep connection with God."²⁰⁷ She described this notion and the necessity in detail as the following.

We worship and trust in a God whom we believe brings life and redemption; we can hold that God accountable to divine

promise. It is our privilege, our right, even our responsibility as the people of God to lament and question when the fullness of life is denied to some persons. We do bad theology when we justify suffering or find only redemptive elements in suffering and thus refrain from questioning God and ourselves.²⁰⁸

Hess here was particularly concerned with girls who often become the victims of discrimination and physical and emotional abuse. She stressed that those girls should know that "they can cry out to God, lament God's seeming absence, and demand God's presence in the wrestling."²⁰⁹ I think the same thing can be said to the elderly Japanese American Christian women, since they have been, as has been demonstrated, the victims of multiple types of discriminations.

CHAPTER 12

Theology for the Future

In the course of this research, I have studied a group of elderly Japanese American Christian women through interviews and other observations, analyzed their experiences as well as their words and actions, and saw several possible interpretations concerning their current spiritual conditions. Now let I will go back and revisit several key theological questions that were raised at the beginning of this study. They were: the notion of God's transcendence and its spiritual impacts, the idea of determinism and its influence on one's spirituality, and the presence of non-Christian cultural ideas which influences some Christian's spirituality. And in dealing with these issues, I wish to use the perspectives of process theology to illuminate the critical issues of silence and openness in the lives of those elderly, Japanese American women. I also wish to engage in brief theological dialogues, specifically dealing with the issue of spiritual silence, among process theology, classical theism, my

own theological convictions, and the spiritual tendencies of elderly Japanese Christian women who were observed and interviewed in this study.

Transcendence of God

The first theological question I posed at the beginning of this study was regarding a relationship between the elderly Japanese American Christian women's view of God's transcendence and their spirituality. By the term transcendence, I was simply referring to a notion that God is different from human beings and not the same. The question here is that how do they imagine the distance between God and human beings to be, and how that affects their spirituality. I have shown, time and time again, many elderly Japanese Christian women, especially those who were categorized as very religious and very silent, saw God as an all-powerful being, and at the same time, a being far-removed from their everyday experiences. New images of God may be needed for those who only view God as an almighty being or a dominant patriarch, because I have explained in prior chapters that such a view of God will likely result in further silencing of those who are already silenced by society's oppressive influences.

Process theology confronts the images of God that are immutable and impassive. Such notions, according to Cobb and Griffin, "stress that deity must be completely unaffected by any other reality and must lack all passion or emotional response."²¹⁰ Absolute and unchangeable God, from the process perspective, also represents God who is not really related to the world.²¹¹ Process theology also denies the image of God as a divine lawgiver and judge, "who keeps records of offenses, and who will punish offenders."²¹² Instead, process theology and its bipolar view sees God as God, not because he is above this world but rather because he is at the heart of it. God also is a God of persuasive love and not coercive power. Whitehead speaks of God as "the poet of the world, with tender patience leading it by his vision of truth, beauty, and goodness."²¹³ Many Japanese American women who have encountered so many injustices can also take comfort in the process view of God who passionately works for justice and acts to create fairness.²¹⁴

I consider the process view's emphasis on the intimacy of God to be very helpful to those who only see God as an immutable and impassive being. It appropriately emphasizes the necessity of a theology, which allows God a free and real interaction with

the world. The Bible tells, and in fact it is the theme of the whole Bible, that God loves humans in very personal ways. (Ps. 23, Ps. 63:3, John 3:16, Rom. 5:5) As was discussed earlier, Schubert Ogden, in an explanation of God's transcendence, stressed that God "must be conceived as a genuinely temporal and social reality, and therefore as radically different from the wholly timeless and unrelated absolute of traditional theism."²¹⁵ In my humble opinion, however, the God of traditional theism, who is often perceived as all-powerful and invincible, can also be the God of intimacy. God can be all-powerful and eternal and at the same time be dynamically active in the creation and in the conservation of the world. I tend to see that the fact that God is all-powerful and eternal by nature does not necessary get in the way of Him entering into authentic, personal interaction with a changing world. Traditional theism views this as an important distinction between God's essence and God's personhood. The Bible itself is also filled with references pronouncing God as an almighty and eternal being and at the same time a being who is loving and caring (Gen. 17:1, Ex. 6:3, Ps. 89:8, Is. 6:3, Dt. 7:12-13, Ps. 149:4, Is. 48:14, Dan. 1:9).

As I have pointed out in the prior chapter that the church

where those women attend, often one-sidedly, both implicitly and explicitly, emphasizes the view of God who is omnipotent, who has all the power there is, and can do anything He wants that is not self-contradictory.²¹⁶ I feel strongly that this one-sided emphasis of God, which is often associated with the classical theism, needs to be modified. I also believe that by emphasizing, however without totally denying the God of classical theism, a helpful process notion of God, God of responsive love and gracious care, will result in very positive spiritual impacts especially to those who have been silenced partly because of having an inadequate view of God.²¹⁷ And in doing so, churches should take part in an active recruitment and training of female leaders, so that many may develop the feeling of self-importance and acceptance of the faith community and more importantly of our loving God. This is one way, I see, in which the process perspectives can serve as positive corrective influences in the lives of many elderly Japanese American Christian women.

Determinism

The second theological question I offered had to do with a notion of Christian determinism and its effect on one's

spirituality. By the term 'determinism,' I did not mean philosophical determinism such as that of Hobbes or Spinoza. I was referring to a common Christian notion that says, since God is an omnipotent and all knowing being, all the past, present, and future events were and are already determined by God." Some may call this God's omniscience or Divine foreknowledge, which describes God as a being who "stands outside of time so as to see all of time at once, and hence knows the future infallibly."²¹⁸

During many months of observing the elderly, Japanese Christian women, I have repeatedly witnessed many of them, especially those who were categorized as very religious and silent, using the phrase "it was the will of God" to indicate that there was very little that they could have done to change the situation. I have also expressed that long years of oppressive influences have likely resulted in this feeling of despondency and hopelessness.

Process theology again offers a very helpful concept, against this apathetic feeling, which is the notion of "novelty." Whitehead explained this notion as, "that ultimate principle by which the many, which are the universe disjunctivity, becomes one actual occasion, which is the universe conjunctivity."²¹⁹

In the process view the universe moves from separateness toward

unity, "the many become one, and are increased by many."²²⁰ And this creates a novel entity that is more than its parts. The God of process theology is "the ground for order," but this is a "changing and developing order, an order that must continually incorporate novelty if it is not to become repressive of enjoyment."²²¹

Actualization of novel possibility generally increases the enjoyment of experience," according to Cobb and Griffin, for "the variety of possibilities that are actualized in an experience adds richness to the experience, and the element of novelty lends zest and intensity of enjoyment."²²²

The notion of novelty in process thought helps to surmount the fear of an unmoving and indifferent God.

The notion of novelty supports an openness of interpretation of the Bible, rather than a hermeneutic of inflexibility. Many silent, Japanese women in this study saw the Bible as a document to be received. Consequently, many of them became distanced from it. Through this process view, believers can approach the Bible as living words of God. Stories of Jesus and of Israel can be experienced firsthand, not as "once-for-all events in the past."²²³ It is an important role of religious educators to encourage people to engage in this type of interaction with a

religious tradition. Prayer and meditation should also be encouraged among the believers. It will allow, "Mysteries incarnate in the world to touch the learners and encourage a sense of the mysteries they will never be able to touch."²²⁴

The process concept of novelty can also offer a new vision of future to those silenced, elderly women. It was revealed in the course of interviews that many elderly Japanese American women associated their spiritual future with doing. Since many silenced women only saw their self-worth in selflessly serving God and the church, many expressed their fears about the time in their future when they will no longer be able to 'serve' because of their physical decline. It is evident, from my observations, that many elderly, Japanese American Christians derive meaning and satisfaction from doing things for God and for the church. But the time of physical decline, which may prevent one from participating in various church activities, will come, soon or later, to those who fear. So, the task of finding satisfaction in life that does not have to do with 'doing' becomes a key in attaining peace in one's later life.

The process model can direct elderly to move from 'doing' to 'being,' in order to attain peace, according to John Cobb and

Thomas Au. In the process model, God's call is unique in every moment. "The ideal for the believer is openness to that call and spontaneous responsiveness."²²⁵ Cobb and Au believe that whereas, "for youth the call of God is to find present satisfaction in preparing for future responsibilities," but for the aging, God's call is "to find peace in the enjoyment of what is as it happens."

²²⁶ During the interviews regarding their future, I observed an apparent contradiction in many silenced elderly Japanese American women. On one hand, many of them repeated the phrases "the will of God" and "providence" in terms of understanding their past. However, on the other hand, they seemed not ready to accept the "will of God" or "providence" for their future and expressed their desire to be useful as long as possible. The process model of God's calling perhaps can help elderly Japanese American Christian women to jettison their fear of un-usefulness and move them to being from doing. It will show them that God loves humans not by human works but by His grace (Ep. 2:9-10).

The problem of determinism is a very challenging and perplexing issue for me personally, since I hold a more traditional theistic view of God, which points to all-powerful

and all-knowing God. I believe that "God's love for the suffering must include God's real participation in that suffering."²²⁷ And at the same time, I also believe that nothing humans do should influence or change God who can exist "with no less perfection without us."²²⁸ I often struggle with a question; how far can humans go in "allowing for the openness of history and the world's impact on God without sacrificing God's Leadership over history – and, in the extreme case, even the worshipability of God?"²²⁹ I wish I could pronounce firmly, as many process theologians do, that my view of God does not contradict with my view of human freedom and the openness of human history. Nelson Pike, in his book *God and Timelessness* argued that, since a timelessness of God is not in agreement with the basic biblical notion of God and therefore "should not be included in a system of Christian theology."²³⁰ The Bible does repeatedly speak of God changing His mind in responding to his people's requests or their change of hearts (Josh. 10:14, John 3:36). God also established a new covenant and one day, God will create a new heaven and new earth (Jer. 31:31, Rev. 21:1). However, the Bible also speaks of God as not changing and timeless (Ps. 102:26,27, Mal. 3:6, Heb. 6:18). And I tend to see that the image of timeless God does not

necessarily go against the teachings of the Bible. Some argue that the confusion concerning the dilemma of God's timelessness may be resolved, if a distinction is made between God's activity and God's attributes, stating that while God may chose to act differently in response to different human behaviors, God's essential aim and his will never change.²³¹

This idea suggests that the timelessness and the omniscience of God (God foreknows what comes to pass before we act), and the meaningfulness and freedom of our action do not necessary contradict each other. Process theologians often argue that Divine foreknowledge entails fatalism.²³² Fatalism, in short, sees that everything that happens does so necessarily and, therefore, we cannot do anything other than what we shall do.²³³ It is true that only one future course of events can happen according to the notion of Divine foreknowledge, however it does not necessarily follow that this future course of events will occur irrespective of our deliberations and choices, since "the future will unfold by running through the chain of events constituting our deliberations and choices, and thus these play a crucial role causally contributing to what the future is going to be."²³⁴ To state this differently, Divine foreknowledge does

not entail fatalism because, although God's foreknowledge is chronologically prior to our action, our action is logically prior to God's foreknowledge.²³⁵

Looking at this issue from the viewpoint of many Japanese American people who experienced the internment-related hardships, I think it is possible that seeing God as an unchanging and timeless being may have been helpful for those who were wronged. As was shown in the chapter on history, Japanese Americans, including those who participated in this study, were uprooted from their lives religiously as well as culturally, and were forced to endure a long period of uncertainty. Seeing drastic and forced changes all around them, Japanese Americans believing in God as an unchanging being may have been their natural inclination and may have greatly comforted them in the moments of their fear and anxiety. It may also be true that in their current life, facing unique age-related challenges as elderly Japanese American women, the thought of an unchanging God may give comfort to those who are struggling to accept their decline in physical as well as mental abilities and their reduced role in society and in their family. What I am trying to say here is that, as far as certain images of God being helpful to elderly, Japanese

American women, while recognizing that the process notion of God's novelty greatly enriches their spirituality, a more traditional image of an unchanging God may also aid the lives of elderly Japanese Christian women given their unique history. I am also humbly trying to suggest theologically that, although fatalism needs to be avoided and corrected, viewing God as a timeless and unchanging being may not be totally inconsistent with the notion of human freedom and meaningfulness of human actions.

However, in thinking about the elderly Japanese American Christian women who are spiritually very silent, rather than seeking only the logical soundness and making a determination to accept or reject a theological viewpoint, rather than engaging in a selective reading of the Bible to determine which part may be accurate and useful, and rather than a church leader, such as myself, supplying a theological position for them to accept, I feel it is more important to encourage them to struggle personally with the issue and reflect on the possible reasons why God has left the door of interpretation for this issue so wide open for humans. I am in no way trying to minimize the work of theologians who think rationally about the nature of God and

about our faith. However, I think this issue may turn into a great opportunity to encourage the elderly Japanese American Christian women to engage in a deep conversation with the Bible, by stressing the passages concerning God's mutual and creative involvements with the human beings (Gen. 3, Rom. 7:18, 1 Cor. 9:17, 1Pet. 5:2, Philem. 14), and challenging their view of God who is all-knowing and unchanging. According to Hess, "Conversing with the Bible is an act of caring for the Bible; it is a desire to be in genuine relationship to its witness."²³⁶ And as was discussed in a prior chapter, this kind of deep conversation will help those silenced, elderly Japanese American women to regain their spiritual openness and voices.

Interaction of Christian Value and Cultural Value

The third theological question I presented at the beginning of this dissertation had to do with the presence of a traditional Japanese cultural notion of virtue, which was very similar to a Christian notion of virtue. During the course of this research, one Japanese word, which repeatedly emerged, although most of them barely spoke Japanese, was "gaman." The word is usually translated as 'selfless patience.' This word was often mentioned

when the elderly Japanese American Christian women were talking about their wartime experiences or their illnesses. "Gaman" was used as a virtuous action or an attitude to endure those challenges. The term was most often used by those women who were considered silent and was interpreted, in the last chapter, as a word that characterizes the tendency of self-denial in those women. Most of them felt that they had to "gaman" in order to be a good Japanese daughter, a Japanese wife, or a Japanese mother. I also felt that most of them believed that "gaman" makes them better Christians.

The problem that I see here is not so much that this word was used often by many elderly Japanese American Christian women, for it is a very popular word which appears in many conversations between Japanese persons regardless of their age, gender or religion; the problem I see here is that the word is being used by many Christians without awareness that "gaman" is different from the Christian virtue of selfless endurance. The term "gaman" comes from Buddhist thought, and it originally denoted "an iniquitous worldly desire to put one first." "Gaman" was one of four most despised worldly desires or "bonnou" in Buddhism, along with "gachi" "gaken" and "gaai." "Gachi" means "not understanding

self-denial." "Gaken means "longing for physical objects." "Gaai" means "yearning for love." "Ga" means "self" and this list of four worldly desires teaches the followers of Buddha to empty the self to deny completely one's worldly desires. The term "gaman," departed from its original meaning later and is commonly used as a term, which means 'not putting one-self first.' The virtue of self-denial, which appears in the Bible, in my opinion, is very different from that concept in Buddhism. Denying one's self means to abandon one's sinful nature that is filled with worldly malice and unfairness, but at the same time fill one-self with divine values of hope, love and justice. The Bible does not tell us to deny one's self completely, but to love and accept one's self (Mk. 12:31). However, the Christian notion of self-esteem involves a comfortableness with one's self, but without total complacency and is not devoid of a drive for personal growth (Rom. 12:2).

At this point, process theology again offers, although not directly related to the issue of "gaman," a helpful notion called 'concrecence.' It is a bipolar process involving the interplay between physical feelings and mental valuations, in which prehensions of early phases are contrasted in later phases.²³⁷

It explains that all of the elements of past experience are brought into a unity in the becoming occasion.²³⁸ According to Whitehead, the most fundamental process of all of reality is, "the many becoming one and are increased by one."²³⁹ Japanese Americans are affected by the entire past experience of their culture, so that their past as well as their beliefs should always be the subject of critical reflections. The past cannot and should not be removed from their present. The Japanese American, Christian community should take this type of historical reflection seriously. It was partly because the lack of this type of reflection, in my opinion, which resulted in the term "gaman" to be used in the church which unintentionally encouraged many women to endure their pains and sufferings blindly. I am not saying that one should deny all the religious influences other than that of Christianity. I believe that there are many teachings and concepts in Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shintoism that are very helpful, especially for the lives of elderly Japanese American women. However, as Paul wrote, it is the responsibility of each Christian, and perhaps especially that of those who hold the theological leadership in a church, to make a determination on which cultural words and customs can be incorporated into the

lives of Christians, and which of those should be looked at with caution (Rom. 12:2). Critical historical reflections will also reveal how the elderly Japanese American Christian women were marginalized and discriminated in their past. It will encourage them to face the reality of their past in a way that empowers them. The Bible is filled with references about remembering the past to thank God and to teach humans not to go back to the wicked old ways (Deut. 24:9, 32:7).

Some Practical Proposals

Having seen how the number of elderly Japanese American Christian women's spiritual openness has been deeply influenced by their life experiences as well as their theological encounters, and having seen also how one's spiritual silence predictably and unavoidably brings about many negative consequences, there is now one very crucial question remaining: how can an elderly Japanese American Christian women gain or in some cases regain her spiritual openness? As was discussed in the previous section, one clear way, in which positive changes can take place, is for them to engage in deep theological dialogues, aided by the perspectives of process theology. However, it is unfair to the

elderly Japanese American Christian women for me to throw often difficult theological concepts casually and insensitively at them and expect positive changes to occur. As a religious educator, I feel strongly and passionately that it is the responsibility of the local churches to provide vehicles for them to achieve the positive changes in their spiritual lives. Based on the previous theological discussions in this dissertation, I now wish to make several practical proposals for this particular church, where the study took place, so that she too can change and be used as a vehicle to bring about spiritual changes in the lives of many elderly, Japanese American, female members.

There are, however, several different ways in which changes can take place in a church such as this one.²⁴⁰ One is a top down change. The top down change most often occurs when changes in the leadership take place. A pastor can transform her or his theological leanings and decide to implement more open theological dialogues for the members. Or, a different pastor can come in and bring about those changes. Although it is an effective way for great changes to take place in a relatively short amount of time, a new appointment process itself usually takes a long time, and the change needs to be supported by the

majority of church members.

Two, elderly Japanese persons can leave this church and move to another. However, it seems to me that this would go against the basic process notion of interconnectedness of societies. Instead of forsaking a community, a process model would encourage people to become agents of change themselves. I also see this religious community as very valuable and full of great potentials. Besides this community did allow Mrs. J's spirituality to flourish in spiritual openness.

The third possible way for change is bottom-up. This occurs when a layperson with a passion for religious education, who possesses a great desire for transformation and who also is willing and has patience, starts from within the power structure and brings about changes. This passionate layperson, in my opinion, should be a woman, at least at the early stages, for two reasons. One, I speculated that I, as a male Christian, may have unknowingly represented some oppressive influences that many silenced women experienced during their life journeys. A man will likely be a stumbling block in this very important endeavor in encouraging many silenced individuals to become open spiritually. Two, it has been suggested that women leaders are

needed in Christian ministries as role models.²⁴¹ Women role models are in great need, especially for a church such as this one. Bottom-up changes will occur slowly, but it is a kind of change that can be commenced by a layperson. I am more interested in this kind of change and am making several practical proposals that are designed to make smaller changes with a hopeful spirit that bigger changes will occur later.

First, a passionate layperson can begin with building good relationships with the elderly women in the fellowship. A passionate layperson, then, should start listening, listening to the silent women who are all around. Listening to the silence will also involve, becoming silent one's self before God, in order to counter the many desires which pile up our minds with words and ideas, and in order to seek God's wisdom in silence.²⁴²

Second, a passionate layperson can gather silenced women, perhaps starting with just two or three during the lunch time, in an attempt to encourage them to listen to one another. A passionate layperson should show an example of openness by becoming vulnerable herself among those women. Expressing one's vulnerability will allow the distance between individuals in this group to shrink.²⁴³ A passionate layperson should also be mindful

of nurturing and encouraging silent women to become empowered, so that they themselves can start listening to the silence of others'.²⁴⁴

Third, a passionate layperson can encourage women in this group to engage in more meaningful and open encounters with the Bible. Perhaps she or he can start by asking such questions as: "What does this passage mean to you?" or "What kind of questions does this passage stir in you to make?" In encouraging the seniors to have open discussions, a passionate layperson perhaps should know the basic needs and desires of the elderly population, as it was outlined in chapter five of this dissertation. The traditional banking method should not be used here, but rather, it should be an interaction and a communication with this living text, a type of encounter that Carol Lakey Hess calls a "conversations with the Bible."²⁴⁵

Fourth, a passionate layperson can suggest changes in the program format for the senior fellowship to include group discussions, after a presentation or a project, or perhaps changes in the presentations themselves. Changes may include more thoughtful and emotionally provocative subjects, such as Japanese internment or Korean comfort women. A passionate

layperson should be mindful of creating a safe environment in which lively dialogues and discussions, that may include social analysis and critiques, among the seniors can take place.^{2 4 6}

Story of a Courageous Woman

What then should the role of a male pastor be, when he becomes aware that many elderly, Japanese American women in his congregation are spiritually silenced because of the many oppressive influences in their lives, including that of the church itself? Since one of the problems already pointed out was the male dominance of the church leadership positions, male pastors should first encourage more women leadership in the church to take place. A male pastor also should give, from the pulpit, encouragements to effect positive changes. And in that spirit, I would like to end this study with a story from the Bible.

The Gospel according to Mark 5:25-34 tells a story of a woman who suffered from a bleeding problem for 12 years. Mark tells us that the woman, in her desperate attempt to get well, touched Jesus' cloak from behind among a large crowd. And when she did, her sickness was instantly cured. Jesus then asked the crowd,

"Who touched me?" Luke, in describing the same story, added that Jesus felt his power going out from him. (Luke 8:46) When the women thought she would not be able to get away with what she did, and in fear, went in front of Jesus and confessed. Mark documents that instead of condemning her, Jesus said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."²⁴⁷ Reading this story, I am struck by several actions that are unusual. One, why did the women approach Jesus from behind, where many others in the Bible cried out to Jesus for help in the public? Two, why did Jesus, instead of letting the healed women go, insisted that she come in front of him and confess what she had done?

From both Mark's and Luke's description, its not clear and it is not known precisely from what illness she was suffering. The Bible only says that she was suffering from a bleeding problem for 12 years. If one bleeds from contusions or cuts either internally or externally, he or she is unlikely to survive prolonged blood loss. Therefore, it probably was a menstrual or uterine disorder, from which she was suffering.²⁴⁸ And if it was the case, she was in a considerable predicament. According to an Old Testament law in Leviticus 15:25, she would have been

classified as a woman who is in a constant state of ritual uncleanness. Such a woman was not permitted to worship in the synagogue. Anyone who comes into contact with her would also be classified as unclean and forced to go through a lengthy cleansing ritual.

The law, which was originally put into place to help women from unwanted sexual advances of thoughtless and inconsiderate men, was now used to condemn morally women in the Pharisaic tradition of Jesus' days. It was very likely that she was not able to have normal relationships with others, by occupying a place of social outcast. Having this condition, it was only natural that she approached Jesus from behind, not wanting to receive much attention from others, which may result in her removal from the crowd. So for her to go out into public and want to touch Jesus, who was enormously popular among many, took considerable courage. She was not about to tolerate her pain and suffering silently.

Why then did Jesus, knowing that her sickness was already healed by the touching of his cloak, not let her go quietly? Why did he compel her into a predicament where she was forced to face the public, which she feared very much? It was because Jesus knew

that her needs were not completely met only by the healing of her bleeding problem alone. Being the Son of God, Jesus knew her personal history very well. Being placed under a horrific oppression and a condition of segregation for 12 long years, Jesus knew that her inner-self was crushed and along with her physical-self, it was also in a great need of healing (Philp. 4:19). By encouraging her to come forward to face the public and praising her faith in front of a large crowd, her self-esteem was being restored and her status in her community was being secured. And she received what she really deserved, by being called a daughter, a loving personal relationship with the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

Several practical theological lessons can be learned from this story. First, the sick and suffering woman was not a silent woman. She courageously asserted herself in the best way she could to let Jesus know of her needs and was richly rewarded for her spirited action. As the process notion of novelty demonstrates, the God of the Bible encourages humans to participate actively in their own future with faith in loving God. Thinking about and taking care of oneself is not sin but is an important part of the great teachings of Jesus, which commands humans to love

one-self, before humans also love their neighbors. (Mark 12:31)

Second, Jesus, in creating a new order of grace, denied the old oppressive ways of judgmental actions and attitudes. One of Jesus' very important missions in this world was to free those who were oppressed and demoralized. As was explained through the process notion of a caring God, God of the Bible is not the one who exists far, far away from humans, but rather one who participates actively in our lives with everlasting love and Divine of justice. Humans can take comfort in God, because God is on the side of the oppressed and marginalized.

Three, Jesus was concerned with the women's whole physical, emotional, and spiritual well being, as well as her personal history. The model of caring that Jesus demonstrated to humans is a kind of caring that concerns one's whole being. As the process notion of concrescence reveals, the past cannot be removed from the present. Socio-cultural life also should not be separated from spiritual life. Again, the God of the Bible is concerned with the whole being, thus in human's caring relationships, they should aim to do the same.

Four, the God of the Bible is not a God who is immutable and impassible, but one who wishes to have relationships with human

beings. Jesus, in this story, demonstrated his commitment to having a real loving relationship with the woman. And real loving relationships are not superficial relationships but ones that involve "hard dialogue and deep connection with God."²⁴⁹

The silent, elderly Japanese American Christian women should be encouraged to have their own voices in the religious community in which they belong. People in the leadership positions need to be concerned with their whole being, including their physical, emotional, spiritual condition, as well as their personal history. Leaders also need to stress the relationship aspect of God in order to encourage them to enter into a more meaningful spiritual interactions with a loving God.

The Last Word

As a researcher, I see a great need in accumulating more data through different means of observations to make more analyses and interpretations concerning the spirituality of elderly, Japanese Americans and that of other oppressed elderly people in society, not just to help them but to learn from those who have endured so much. And as a student of theology, I also see

a great need for more theological dialogues, based on the lived experiences, to occur, in order for caring communities, especially churches, to make a difference in the lives of elderly persons as well as in the lives of others.²⁵⁰

Notes

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² Ibid., 351-52.

³ Michael Quinn Patton, Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2002), 104-07.

⁴ Ibid., 125.

⁵ Anselm Straus and Juliet Corbin, Basics of Qualitative Research, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1998), 12.

⁶ W. Norman Pittenger, "Process Theology and Christian Education," Religious Education 68, no. 3 (May-June 1973): 308.

⁷ Alfred North Whitehead, Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology (New York: Humanities Press, 1929), 317.

⁸ Alfred North Whitehead, Science and the Modern World (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 88.

⁹ Whitehead, Process and Reality, 521.

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¹¹ Theologians in this empirical stream include such scholars as Bernard Loomer, Bernard Meland, and Henry Weiman. For further discussions, read a section titled, "Process Theology: The Chicago School," in Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition, ed. John B. Cobb, Jr. and David Ray Griffin (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 176-80.

¹² David R Griffin, "Hartshorne's Differences from Whitehead," in Two Process Philosophers: Hartshorne's Encounter with Whitehead, AAR Studies in Religion, no.5, ed. Lewis S. Ford | (Tallahassee: American Academy of Religion, 1973), 36.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 48.

¹⁵ Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, "John B Cobb, Jr.," in A New Handbook of Christian Theologians, ed. Donald W. Musser and Joshph L. Price (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 109.

¹⁶ John B. Cobb, A Christian Natural Theology (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), 178.

¹⁷ Ogden is a theologian who is in the rational-stream side of process theology along with Hartshorne and Cobb. Schubert M. Ogden, The Reality of God and Other Essays (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 122.

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¹⁹ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "The Love of God – It's Place, Meaning, and Function in Systematic Theology," in Nothing Greater, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 8.

²⁰ W. Norman Pittenger, The Word Incarnate: A Study of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ (New York: Harper, 1959), 149. See also John B. Cobb, Jr. and David Ray Griffin, Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 180-81.

²¹ W. Norman Pittenger, "Bernard E. Meland, Process Theology, and Significance of Christ," in Process Theology, ed. Ewert H. Cousins (New York: Newman Press, 1971), 210.

²² Ibid.

²³ Pittenger, Word Incarnate, 149.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Whitehead, Process and Reality, 472.

²⁶ Ibid.

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²⁸ Cobb and Griffin, 28.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Randolph C. Miller, "Whitehead and Religious Education," Religious Education 68, no. 3 (May-June 1973): 316-17.

³¹ Patton, 105.

³² Ibid., 106.

³³ Mary Elizabeth Moore, Teaching from the Heart: Theology and Educational Method (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press, 1998), 95.

³⁴ I wrote this illustration by borrowing from Dr. Moore's illustration about a hiker and a mountain stream. Since I am a surfer, this was my own experience of a 10-foot wave some years ago. Moore, Teaching from the Heart, 95.

³⁵ Max Van Manen, Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy (New York: State University of New York, 1990), 9.

³⁶ Moore, Teaching from the Heart, 95.

³⁷ Derrida, who rejected the distinction between present and non-present meaning, criticized this notion as *logo-centrism*.

³⁸ Moore, Teaching from the Heart, 96.

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⁴⁰ Patton, 106.

⁴¹ Tony R. Eichelberger, Disciplined Inquiry: Understanding and Doing Educational Research (New York: Longman, 1989), 6.

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⁴³ Moore, Teaching from the Heart, 110.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 114.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 104-05.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 130.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 116.

⁵¹ Ibid., 107-08.

⁵² Ibid., 118.

⁵³ Ibid., 117.

⁵⁴ Marjorie Suchocki, "Openness and Mutuality in Process Thought and Feminist Action," in Feminism and Process Thought, ed. Sheila Greeve Davaney (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1981), 62-82.

⁵⁵ Thomas Au and John B. Cobb, Jr., "A Process Theology Perspective," in Aging, Spirituality, and Religion, ed. Melvin A. Kimble, Susan H. McFadden, James W. Ellor, and James J. Seeber (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 448.

⁵⁶ Moore, Teaching from the Heart, 62.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 125.

⁵⁸ David Ray Griffin, God, Power and Evil: A Process Theodicy (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976).

⁵⁹ Patton, 1.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 14.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., 125.

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⁶⁶ Ibid., 235.

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⁶⁹ Ibid., 555.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 342.

⁷¹ Ibid., 284.

⁷² Ibid., 433.

⁷³ Strauss and Corbin, Basics of Qualitative Research, 13.

⁷⁴ Patton, 434.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 440.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 53.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 453.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 457-58.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 466.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 467.

⁸¹ Ibid., 480.

⁸² Strauss and Corbin, Basics of Qualitative Research, 13.

⁸³ Ibid.

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- ¹⁴⁵ Tetsuya Kobayashi, Society, Schools and Progress in Japan (Oxford, N.Y.: Pergamon Press, 1976), 17-18.
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²⁴² Moore, "Women and Men in Social Order," 88.

²⁴³ Ibid., 87.

²⁴⁴ Hess, 227.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 193.

²⁴⁶ Moore, "Women and Men in Social Order," 89.

²⁴⁷ Mark 5.34 NIV.

²⁴⁸ William L. Lane, The Gospel according to Mark, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1974), 191.

²⁴⁹ Hess, 209.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 246.

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